

JERSEY BEAT



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YOU
KNOW?

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#33

In
The
Congo
with
The
Bongos



Richard Barone

Destroy All Bands

Strange Cave

Verbal Assault

Green

Too many reviews

Photos, comix, art

Pull Out 1987 Best Of Insert



JERSEY BEAT!

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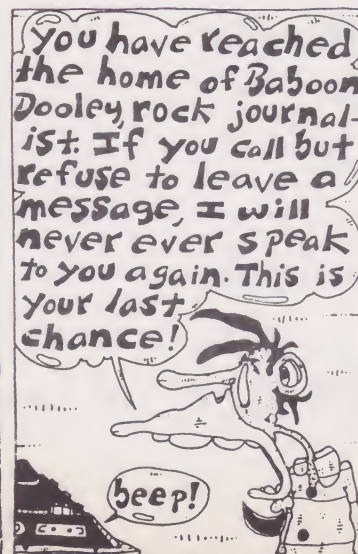
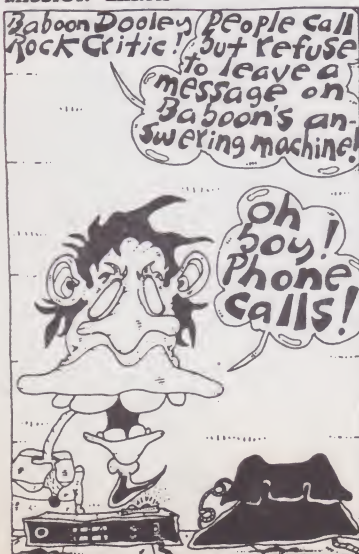
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Thanks to John Crawford and Ace
Backwards for cartoon strips.

MISSION EARTH



From the Editor's Desk

"I believe that real rock 'n roll may be on the way out." Lester Bangs wrote that in 1970; but wait, it gets better. "What we will have instead is a small island of new free music surrounded by some good reworkings of past idioms and a vast sargasso sea of absolute garbage."

Whew! Anyone who's been someplace where lots of new-music product piles up - the new CBGB Record Canteen, for instance, or my bedroom - should be blown away by the prescience of that line about a vast sargasso sea of garbage. 'Cos that's what it feel like sometimes, and sometimes I feel like I'm drowning. And the glut of new-music product - the endless list of independent labels, the countless bands releasing LP's and 12-inchers on their own, not to mention the demo cassettes that come in the mail faster than bills - seems all the more depressing because so little of it is special. Oh, sure, lots of it is good; with so many bands, so many records, we live in an age of almost unbridled freedom-of-choice. If you don't like the grungy Jersey hardcore on Buy Our, try the grungy Sixties garage-rock on Midnight...or the bright, ambitious smart-pop on Coyote, or...well, almost anything on SST, easily Label Of The Year both in sheer volume (small pun there) and in a joyful disregard of genres, limitations, or convention. The bottom line on 1987 was that you could find a record to suit almost any taste or any expectation, no matter how weird, or avant-garde, or regressive, or sick. What I didn't find in 1987 were records I still expect to cherish in 1997...like the records from 1977 that still thrill me today. The other big problem is the growing gap between independent label access for new bands, and the quantum leap it takes to move to a major label. The majors are still finding acts out there to sign - anonymous plastic pre-fab "hits" like Richard Marx or Debbie Gibson or, God help us, Europe. And to a small extent the best indie bands get signed - Metallica, Husker Du, Replacements. But New York hasn't put one of its club-bred "underground" bands on the charts since I-don't-know-when (Patti Smith?), and it's almost inconceivable that the Feelies or Sonic Youth or the Bongos will be the ones to break out. There's this unspoken major-label maxim: New York bands are "interesting," L.A. bands sell records. Believe anything hard enough and it'll come true. Don't believe me? Just pick up a copy of Billboard.

And that sucks. In 1977, Sonic Youth or The Feelies or even just a well-bred young guitar band like the Alter Boys would have debuted on a major label. There wasn't any of this underground indie-label minor-league to keep them "in their place." The legacy of New York's 1977 punk-rock bands to their 1987 descendents is an attitude that survival is enough: Gee, the Ramones haven't broken up yet. Gee, Tom Verlaine isn't dead. Gee, the Feelies are playing Maxwells again this month. Isn't that great?

No, it isn't. It sucks. Why the Bangles and not the dB's? Why Poison and not Raging Slab? Why R.E.M. but not Sonic Youth? Lester was right in predicting the rise of small islands of good new music. What he didn't add is that, in his old stomping grounds, bands would achieve nothing at all. Happy new year.

Special thanks go out to Steve and Mary Fallon, Todd Abramson, and the crew at Maxwells, who let us host a benefit at the club in November. Photos to follow in this issue. If you weren't there (and you weren't, were you?) it wouldn't do any good to describe the music. You had to be there. (And you weren't, were you?) Oh yeah, three weeks later someone broke into my house and stole every dollar we made at the show. Mucho thanks to our advertisers and Co-Publisher Bruce Gallanter for helping out financially in our hour of need.

And now for something completely different...



TOP TENS of 1987

KAREN SCHOEMER

Top 10 Records

Nikki Sudden & Roland S. Howard, "Kissed You Kidnapped" (Creation)
Defenestration, "Defenestration" (Slow Iguana)
Original Sins, "Sugar Sugar"/"Just 14" (Bar/None)
Replacements, "Pleased To Meet Me" (Sire)
Nick Haefner, "The Great Indoors" (Bam Caruso)
The Chills, "I Love My Leather Jacket" 12" (Flying Nun)
Absolute Grey, "Painted Post" EP (Midnight)
Muddy Waters, "Folksinger" (Chess Reissue/MCA)
Marianne Faithfull, "Strange Weather" (Island)
Ron Bianco & Bilbo, "Bilbo's Doggone Singalong" (ETF)

Biggest Trend: Major labels buying up independent labels & bands.

Biggest Ripoff: Upped beer prices at Maxwells; imports are never less than \$10; Creem Magazine.

Best Band: Replacements (I mean, who would've thought they could replicate "Gimme Shelter" live?)

CAROL SCHUTZBANK

Top 10 Records

Meat Puppets - "Mirage" (SST)
Electric Love Muffin - "Playdoh Meat Hook" (Buy Our)
Anthrax - "Among The Living" (Island)
FIREHOSE - "Ragin' Full On" (SST)
Dead Kennedys - "Bedtime For Democracy/Give Me Convenience" (Alternative Tentacles)
Metallica - "Garage Days Revisited" (Elektra)
Scram - "Stand Up" (BYO)
Trained Attack Dogs - "Pizza" (Rave)
R.E.M. - "Document" (IRS)
Dead Milkmen - "Bucky Fellini" (Fever)

Honorable Mention: Volcano Suns, Dukes Of Stratosphere, Mojo Nixon & Skid Roper, Replacements, Camper Van Beethoven

Biggest Trend: Heavy metal was everywhere and it got out of hand!
Biggest Ripoff: Spin Magazine (despite the fact that it's good to have a high-profile "alternative" magazine, it'd be nice if it were a little more "alternative.")

Continued on next page

JIM TESTA

Top 10 Records

Squirrel Bait, "Skag Heaven"
(Homestead)
Big Black, "Songs About Fucking"
(Touch & Go)
Naked Raygun, "Vanilla Blue" 45
(Sandpounder)
Zero Boys, "Vicious Circle" (Toxic
Shock)
Chris Stamey, "It's Alright"
(Coyote)
Replacements, "Pleased To Meet Me"
(Sire)
Sonic Youth, "Sister" (SST)
Richard Barone, "Cool Blue Halo,"
(Passport)
Dramaram, "Box Office Bomb" (?)

Biggest Trend: 70's Revival
Biggest Ripoff: 6 or 8 song
mini-lp's for album prices

Best Band: Tie: Feelies/Adrenalin
OD

HOWARD WUELFING

Top Ten Records

Prince, "Sign O' The Times" (Paisley
Park)
Swans, "Children Of God" (Caroline)
Game Theory, "Lolita Nation"
(Enigma)
Pop Will Eat Itself, "Now For A
Feast" (Rough Trade)
Metallica, "The 5.98 EP" (Elektra)
David Lee Roth, "Eat 'Em & Smile"
(Warner Bros.)
Bobby Sutliff, "Only Ghosts Remain"
(PVC)
These Immortal Souls, "Get Lost
(Don't Lie)" (SST)
Bangles, "Hazy Shade Of Winter" (Def
Jam)
dB's, "The Sound Of Music" (IRS)

Biggest Trend: Loud noisy rock n
roll
Biggest Ripoff: Looks like hell,
sounds like the fuggin' Bay City
Rollers!

Best Band: Agony Column (Austin, TX)

DAWN EDEN

Top 10 Records

Cheepskates, "Remember" (Music
Maniac)
Deep Six, "Garage D'Or" (Coyote)
Los Negativos, "Piknik
Caleidoscopico" (Victoria/Spain)
The Patriots, "Pharoah's Land"
(Bam-Casuso)
The Livingstones, "Fastest Car
Around"/"You're Not A Better Man
Than I" (Sunlight/Sweden)
The Ravens, "Nevermore"/"Ravenous"
The Zombies, "Odessey And Oracle"
(Rhino)
"The Washington Squares" (Gold
Castle/Polygram)
Dukes Of Stratosphere, "Psonic
Psunspot" (Geffen)

Biggest Trend: Backlash against
synthesizer music
Biggest Ripoff: Alex Chilton's "High
Priest" LP. Maybe next time, A.C.

Best Band: The Cheepskates

Jim DeRogatis

Top Ten Records

Breaking Circus, "The Ice Machine"
(Homestead)
Wire, "The Ideal Copy" (Enigma/Mute)
Big Dipper, "Boo Boo" (Homestead)
Butthole Surfers, "Rembrandt
Pussyhorse" (Touch & Go)
Yung Wu, "Shore Leave" (Coyote)
R.E.M., "Document" (IRS)
The 27 Various, "Hi" (Susstone)
Opal, "Happy Nightmare Baby" (SST)
Robyn Hitchcock, "Invisible
Hitchcock" (Relativity)
Chris Stamey, "It's Alright"
(Coyote/A&M)

Biggest Trend: Cover versions (Pussy
Galore's "Exile," X Lion Tamers,
etc)

Biggest Ripoff: Pussy Galore
(record)

Best Band: Pussy Galore (live)

JOHN LISA

Top 10 Records

Dinosaur, "You're Livin' All Over
Me"/ 12" EP (SST)
G.G. Allin & The Holymen, "You Give
Love A Bad Name" LP (Homestead) and
"Dirty Love Songs" (New Rose)
White Flag, "Wild Kingdom" (Positive
Force)
Lemonheads, "Hate Your Friends"
(Taang)
Various, "Turn It Around
Compilation" (Maximum R&R)
Leaving Trains, "Fuck" (SST)
Celtic Frost, "Into The Pandemonium"
(Combat)
Sonic Youth, "Sister" (SST)
Marillion, "Clutching At Straws"
(EMI)
Das Damen, "Jupiter Eye" (SST)

Biggest Trend: Jesus & Mary Chain

Biggest Ripoff: Bleecker Bobs

Best Live Band: G.G. Allin!!!!!!

CHRIS FRANZCZ

Top 10 Records

Bad Brains - "I Against I" (SST)
Crocodile Shop - "Head" (Susstone)
The Future Looks Brighter -
Compilation (Posh Boy)
Laughing Hyenas - "Merry Go Round"
(Touch & Go)
H.R. - "Viva Azania" (SST)
Blast! - "It's In My Blood" (SST)
Viva Umkhonto! Compilation (Mordam)
Henry Rollins - "Animal Sex Machine"
(Texas Hotel)
Mrs. Whitehead - "What's The Big
Idea?" cassette
Butthole Surfers - "Locust Abortion
Technician" (Touch & Go)

Biggest Trend: Snotty smartass
fanzines copying Forced Exposure

Biggest Ripoff: Albums with no info
inside, and only a plastic sleeve.

Best Band: Circle Jerks (only band I
saw live in 1987!)

MARK FOGARTY

Top 10 Records

Meat Puppets - "Mirage" (SST)
Replacements - "Pleased To Meet Me"
(Sire)
R.E.M. - "Document" (IRS)
Jimi Hendrix Experience - "Live At
Winterland" (Rykodisc)
Nice Strong Arm - "Reality Bath"
(Homestead)
U2 - "Joshua Tree" (Island)
Illiterate Beach - "No Polyester
Please" (Susstone)
Tom Verlaine - "Flashlight" (IRS)
Henry Rollins Band - "Hot Animal
Machine" (Texas Hotel)
Nick Drake - "Fruit Tree" (Hannibal)

Top 10 Records

Best Band: Buttholes-live/ Dinosaur LP

1. DINOSAUR, "You're Living All Over Me" (SST)
2. SONIC YOUTH, "Sister" (SST)
3. R.E.M., "Document" (IRS)
4. REPLACEMENTS, "Pleased To Meet Me" (Sire)
5. BOBBY SUTLIFF, "Only Ghosts Remain" (Passport)
6. CHRIS STAMEY, "It's Alright" (Coyote/A&M)
7. SQUIRREL BAIT, "Skag Heaven" (Homestead)
8. NAKED RAYGUN, "Vanilla Blue" (Sandpounder)
9. BIG DIPPER, "Boo Boo" (Homestead)
10. FIREHOSE, "Ragin' Full On" (SST)

Anti-Drug T-Shirts

I started
PPP
to say
that

Anti-Drug T-Shirts

there are two sides to every issue. Even when both sides are not equally accepted by the "in crowd." Wearing these shirts in the face of pressure to drink and do drugs expresses a strong point, and also makes for maximum enjoyment.

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SCIENCE

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1988 is here and I have some good news! A slew of new bands are crawling out from everywhere. Although two of my favorite units split up last year (Scornflakes and Pleased Youth), a swarm of new projects and bands are upon us. I have only seen one of the following ten bands but I am psyched to catch all of them soon in the new year.

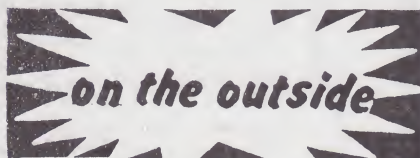
Each of the 5 members of them diverse punk gods, Pleased Youth, are involved in new projects. Teen idol Keith Hartel has been wowing 'em in AOD, who have their 3rd LP about to be released. Skinman/bassist Andy Skovran, along with another member of the defunct NJ's Finest, the infamous Harpo, have a band called Nib Lick Henbane. (Oi-like punk coolness) Axe murderer/guitarist Doug Vizthum is still wailing away in the Lunar/Bear Ensemble, which features poet John Richey and is currently seeking a label.

Former PY drummer Greg Walker is now playing bass in one of New Brunswick's finest bands, Moby Dick, hot & hilarious. Moby Dick once featured the aforementioned Mr. Vizthum and and PY guiding light Paul Decolator, and still includes Cliff & Kara from the last version, plus stand-up drummer Ethan Stein. Mr. Decolator, now living & raising hell in Philadelphia, has a new non-punk band called Blue Train, featuring dudes from Crib Death and The Mystery Squad. Blue Train is completely unlike anything else Decolator has ever done. And yes, those rumors are true, Pleased Youth will be doing at least one reunion gig.

Earlier this year, I reviewed a hot demo from Laurie Es' band, Wasserman Love Puddle. (It was also featured on the cover of the CMJ Report, not bad). Although the personnel continues to change, WLP still blew me away at a recent Tramps gig, and they will soon be playing Maxwells with the equally incredible Young Turks. After the departure of WLP's lead vocalist/guitarist Devious, the group added another hot axe man, Steve Elliot, who along with wailing Mike pumps up a strong double-guitar brew. The Tramps gig also featured obnoxious/funny vocalist Walter (of Asbestos), who has since been dumped. Drummer Davoid, whose solo tape (under the name Butch Hanus) is reviewed in this issue, will be switching to lead vocals when they find another drummer.

Scornflakes/Cleft Palate lead guitar-strangler Billy Tucker has been incredibly busy with a variety of projects. Capitol Records, home of Skinny Puppy, is rather interested in the Cleft duo's dance/noise rap/rep. Mr. Tucker has another unit called PLUG, a female rap/heavy metal sex outfit, which features the vocals of two young ladies, along with music completely provided by Billy. He is also in the studio with another NJ band, recently dubbed Sex Dog Helicopter (Big Black-like grunge rock). And that ain't all. He has been helping out Dig Dat Hole, whose demo is also reviewed this ish. All 4 previously named units, plus rap/noise teen heroes Ween, will be participating in the "Bad Attitude" night at City Gardens on Feb. 12th!!

Andrew & Sim, the throttling rhythm team of Scornflakes/Gone fame, recently returned from a European tour with Henry Rollins. Their 1st LP with daredevil vocalist Rollins will be out in February. Andrew has been spending mucho time with a band called Mighty Joe Young, helping them plan their sound in the studio. "Awesome," claims Andrew. ["The next Das Damen!" - Ed.] If all goes as planned, a very special gig at CBGB in late Feb. will feature Sim & Andrew along with Elliot Sharp & Steve Buchanan, as well as (hopefully) Will To Live and John Richey's Machine Gun. Andrew also helped his brother get the drummer's job in the Swans, due to play CB's in late January.



Before I forget, Laurie Es has recommended 3 newer units for anyone cool to check out: the Freaks (ex-Maneater and Outta Place), the Lunachicks, and a NY unit called Sloth (Stooges/Saints-like who allegedly have only 40 copies of the LP still available). The ever-label searching Young Turks recently blew Soul Asylum off the stage at CBGB. SA were drunk, sloppy, rude, rather Replacements-like, while the Turks (who finally dropped their problem bassist) added Cajun cellist Shawn Grissom to fill in, and were the tightest I have ever seen them. If someone doesn't release their LP soon (2 years+ in the can!!), we will be forced to have to deal in drastic measures. Scott Mucous, beware!

Love, peace, happiness & cut outs,
Bruce Gallanter



Richard Barone's Cool Blue Halo

by Jim Testa

Richard Barone used to sing about a number with wings. Lately, he's been wearing a cool blue halo. And there's something almost cherubic about his unquenchable optimism.

Which makes sense. His new record, Cool Blue Halo, is pop heaven.

Barone is best known as lead singer and guitarist of the Bongos, the quintessential Hoboken pop band that's been on an extended hiatus since the release of 1985's Beat Hotel. The long layoff, Barone insists, was intentional: "We did a long tour after Beat Hotel came out, I think we went across the whole country twice, and then we went on tour with Power Station. I needed some time off just to write and get things together. Everyone in the band felt that, because we really hadn't taken any time off for ourselves for a long time."

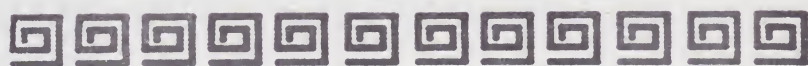
About that time, the Bongos managed to break their five album contract with RCA, a label that never quite seemed to know what to do with the band. "Everytime we turned around it was like a different company, things were changing so fast there," Barone says. A friendship with Island Records' founder Chris Blackwell allowed them to finagle an early release from RCA and "a handshake agreement" with Island to record an album.

"A lot of people think we signed with Island and then were somehow dropped or something, but the truth is we never signed a contract at all," Barone says. "It was all kind of vague." Island flew the band to Compass Point in the Bahamas, and half an album's worth of material was recorded, but things never went any further than that. "They were a lot more interested in being Island Films than Island Records." Barone insists the Bongos remain free to sign with another label at any time. Still, it's hard to imagine any label, even one more interested in making movies than releasing records, footing the bill for a Bahamian vacation and not expecting something in return. At any rate, for the last two years the Bongos have been laying low, weighing options, and pondering their future.

That left Barone and the other Bongos with time on their hands. Barone conceived the idea of the Cool Blue Halo band.

"The idea for the band really came first. The Bongos had gotten to the point where we were really only playing mid-sized places, and it was always this big rock show. I wanted to be able to do small, intimate clubs again." He recruited Nick Celeste of NJ's In Color (whom Barone had produced) on acoustic guitar and Hoboken's peripatetic cellist, Jane Scarpantoni. Shortly, percussionist Valerie Naranjo joined the band.

"Melodically, this material is very stretched out. Unlike the Bongos, we're not tied to the beat. Rock, usually, is very structured, and I wanted the chance to stretch a little, and this gives me that chance, especially with my singing," Barone says. Rehearsals, Barone explains, tend to be very loose, "just jamming on the songs," and the arrangements that people hear at the shows are often improvised. "It's not like I'm a big jazz fan or anything, but I like that part of jazz, that it's free and improvised as you go along."



Continued on next page

By the time Naranjo joined, "We started to realize that this was sounding really good and should be recorded," Barone explains. An invitation from WKRR jock Vin Scelsa to play one of his Bottom Line showcases for new talent provided an opportunity to set up a live recording session with something akin to studio quality. Passport Records - which had previously released the Barone/Jim Mastro project Nuts And Bolts - jumped at the chance to release the resulting album.

"It's doing really good, it's doing incredibly well on radio and it's really selling better than anyone expected," reports Barone. "And the publicity has been great...this record has kept me so busy..." After two years of inactivity with the Bongos, he admits, "it really made me feel good to see there was so much interest. I really didn't know how a project like this would be taken."

As to the future, Barone promises a new Bongos LP this Spring, although the band has yet to sign with a new label. "There are so many labels out there and they're all so different," he says. The RCA experience, Barone says, taught him a lot about the realities of the record business, although - in typically cherubic Bongo fashion - he refuses to be negative about anything that's happened. "I learned a lot from the time at RCA," is about as downbeat as he'll get on the subject.

When the Bongos do record again, they'll do so without Jim Mastro, who officially left the band some months ago. "Of course we're very sorry to see him go, but we all knew it was coming," Barone says. "Jim's always wanted to do his own material. The trouble with the Bongos is that it's very stylized, and it's different from his style. Let's face it, the Bongos are based around my songwriting. He's very excited about his new band."

From the Bongos first singles on England's Fetish label, Barone's been singled out for his writing, a combination of infectious riffs and grooves and playfully obtuse lyrics, which only occasionally make sense. From "Glow In The Dark" to "Number With Wings," the typical Barone lyric is a metaphor that's open to any number of meanings.

"Usually when I write these things, I know what they mean right then, but then later, after the song is all done and being played by the whole band, they start to mean something else," Barone explains. "Like 'Number With Wings,' that meant something to me when I wrote it, but now, I don't know. I met a guy, he had been in prison actually, and he came up to me at a show and started to tell me that he knew exactly what it meant, and that the song was all about prison."

"That happens quite a lot. You know the song, 'I'll Be Your Mirror'? That's me. I try to write in metaphors that are pretty universal, so that they'll mean something to everyone."

The Velvet Underground's "I'll Be Your Mirror" is one of the songs that the Blue Halo band has been performing live, with a very scaled-down arrangement, just Barone on vocals on guitar and Scarpantoni on cello. "It's a song I've always wanted to do, but it never quite fit before. And besides, I don't want to get known for just doing British covers." The three songs on the Halo LP that Barone didn't write are all by British musicians (Beatles, Bowie, and Marc Bolan), as are most of the covers that the Bongos have performed live over the years.

While Barone promotes Cool Blue Halo, drummer Frank Giannini has been playing with George Usher's House Of Usher, while bassist Rob Norris used the time off to complete training for his certification as a licensed physical therapist. In the immediate future, PVC Records' rights to the Bongo's first album, Drums Along The Hudson, expire soon, and the record may be re-released, along with a CD version that will include the song "Nuts And Bolts," previously only available on a Fetish Records compilation.

strange cave



Standing center stage, fronting a red-hot rock combo, surrounded by attractive women, singing your songs...kinda sounds like every kid's fantasy, doesn't it? But for perennial sideman Jim Mastro - now ex- of the Bongos - it's more like a dream come true.

"This is the band I've always wanted," says Mastro, whose Strange Cave is one of the freshest and most promising new groups to hit the New York scene in a while. It's an unusual outfit, with an unusual look: Mastro centerstage on guitar, flanked by Laura Kennedy on bass, Eve Moon on guitar, Jane Scarpantoni on cello, and Helen Hooke on violin. (Original violinist Soozie Tyrell is on an extended hiatus to tour with Bruce Springsteen.) In the back, but certainly not unnoticed, is Ricky Solberg, a childhood pal of Mastro's, on drums.

"I've really built this band around the sound I wanted," says Mastro. "Even in the Bongos, when we did some of my songs, we always used keyboards to try and get the 'sound' of strings. But I've always imagined a band with a real string section. This really is a dream band for me." Strange Cave is a lot more than a concept, though. "That's really the best part of it, this isn't just some girl group like the Bangles, with a lot of light strumming. These women aren't lightweights, they really can play."

Jim Mastro & STRANGE CAVE



That's evident in the band's stage show, a rollicking, rocking, tuneful parlay of Mastro's romantic songs and the playful interplay of the strings and electric guitars. It's Ricky Solberg on drums who really makes this band rock, though. "Yeah, he isn't the fanciest drummer, but he's the loudest drummer I know," beams Mastro.

While a lot of Strange Cave's songs predate the band, Mastro admits he's always written with a string section in mind. "And I try and do some different things with the instruments," he notes. "Like I'll have Jane play a guitar lead on cello, or Eve play a string part on guitar." Now that the band's been together a while, Mastro is writing new material expressly for this lineup. "Knowing how each person plays, I can gear it more to each person," he explains.

"It's not your standard rock fare," Mastro says of his material. When told that the band's show - and especially his interplay with the women on stage, especially Eve Moon, is reminiscent of Prince - Mastro blushes and says, "Well, it's important that we have fun on stage, but I like to think that what we're doing is more than just a big party. The songs I'm writing try to say something. If you do that in a way that's preachy, it's not gonna come across. If you do it in a way that's fun, you can make your point a lot stronger."

While Mastro admits this is going to be a fun band to take on the road someday - "everybody in the band is a real

character," and they're all seasoned veterans when it comes to touring - any kind of real tour will probably have to wait until the band releases some vinyl. "First of all, it's real hard to plan anything, because everyone in the band is so busy," he says. "And besides, I don't want to do a show [out of town] just on the strength of having been in the Bongos. I want the people to come because they've heard the band and want to see us."

While there has been some label interest, Mastro says he's reached the point where he doesn't want to tackle it alone. "I think we're ready to get some management, and start dealing with these things. This band is ready."

One fantasy Mastro will share is his ideal producer. "I've already talked to some people about getting John Cale. He's done so many great first albums for bands. And his stuff is so sparse. I really think he'd be good for our sound."

Strange Cave began in Mastro's New York apartment (he's since moved to Hoboken) as an innocent side project with some friends. "I didn't originally envision all the women in the band, but they were the ones I found who played the instruments I wanted," he says.

"You know, I don't even really care if I ever have a hit record. I'd just like to be able to pay my rent, put some gas in my car, and eat some decent meals. Just as long as I can keep making music."

Thursday, January 14, Maxwells: Two local bands, **Hyno Love Wheel** and **Frictionwheel**. It's a Thursday night, about 10 degrees below zero outside, and the club is packed, practically a sellout. Everyone either of these bands has ever met in college have come to see them. **Hypno Love Wheel** turn out to be a fairly uninteresting and largely generic post-R.E.M. combo; especially grating are the two rhythm guitarists, neither of whom seems capable of playing a lead. So it's all strum, strum, strum. Yawn. **Frictionwheel** are a lot more fun, clean-cut preppie youth but with a healthy (if somewhat wholesome) punk-rock streak somewhere in the souls. Lead singer/guitarist **Willie Lopez** makes a good frontman, and if some of the band's tunes suffer from R.E.M. Syndrome, they have a few others with a livelier, more original kick. Best moment comes when Willie totally spazzes out on the hook to their cover of Television's "See No Evil." The way he loses himself when he screams out the "EVIL!!!" part promises a lot. Okay, so they're still embryonic (the demo Willie delivers pre-dates their 2nd guitarist and is a bit stiff, they need a new one quick). Give them a year and they'll be dangerous.

Friday, January 29, CBGB: Alice Donut/Jello Biafra/False Prophets, Electric Love Muffin: Lots of New Yorkers have been touting **Alice Donut**, including **Water Music's** **Rob Miller**, who got to hear them record their upcoming **Alternative Tentacles** LP. You can see why **Jello Biafra** likes them; lead singer **Tom Antona** is heavily into shtick (dressing up as a psychotic vagrant) and has a decidedly Jello-ish slant to his vocals. (After the show I pass thru the Port Authority and see hundreds of men who look like the caricature this collegiate wiseass is mocking on stage, and the joke pales). Me, I like the Johnny Thunders-ish punk grunge put out by the bassist lots better. I spend the rest of the night hanging out backstage with the **Love Muffin** and **Mykel Board**. **Jello Biafra**, billed as a "special cameo appearance," comes on and unleashes 90 minutes of spoken-word demagoguery at a crowd that probably wouldn't've declared him King and marched on City Hall if he had told them to. After finally relinquishing the stage at 2:30, the **False Prophets** come and, knowing there's still another band to go, do an hour set, plus 2 encores. (Which kind of makes lead singer **Stephen Ielpi's** rhetoric about supporting the punk-rock struggle seem a bit, hmmm, shallow?) **Board** ponders the moral dilemma of taking the band (his long-time friends) to task for this breach of courtesy in his **Maximum Rock n Roll** column. Somewhere in the neighborhood of 4 a.m., **Electric Love Muffin** get on stage and proceed to thrill the bejeesus out of the 30 or so stalwart insomniacs still hanging around (probably to get **Jello's** autograph after the show). **Jim Dunleavy** of **Buy Our Records** gives me a ride back to Jersey, an act of kindness for which I am so appreciative that I now present the following plugs: Coming soon, **Adrenalin O.D.** on both a 12" EP ("**Theme From An Imaginary Midget Western**") and album (**Cruising With Elvis in Big Foot's UFO**), a new **Skulls** LP, and **The Honeymoon Killers** LP, **Turn Me On**.

Saturday, January 30, The Ritz: A Rock Hotel extravaganza with 7 local hardcore bands, the first two of which I manage to miss. **Krackdown**, **Sick Of It All**, and **Supertouch** provide short sets of undistinctive New York moshcore. **Underdog** follows with their new lineup, **Richie** back on vocals and one of the guys from **Token Entry** replacing **Danny** on guitar. This is not a great set, however; **Richie** is sick and has no voice, and the crowd remains blasé throughout the first half of the set, upsetting the band noticeably and throwing off their timing. **Warzone** follows, and since I've been as critical of the NY hardcore scene as anyone, let me be fair here and say they put on a show that any band would be proud of. They're a tight, powerful, wonderfully together band, great catchy songs (the last real Oi band in NY), and praiseworthy politics. Before their set, they handed out a guide of city services for young people (runaway shelters, free medical help, meals, etc.) and throughout their show praised their co-workers, everybody on the stage crew, and just about every other band in the scene. The result was a heady hardcore slam-happy party with the kind of high-energy good vibes that this stuff was made for. How sad that so few bands can pull it off anymore. One measure of a local band's readiness to move on is their ability to fill a larger venue like the Ritz with their stage presence. Most of the other bands on this bill failed; **Warzone** could've made you feel right about the whole night in Madison Square Garden.

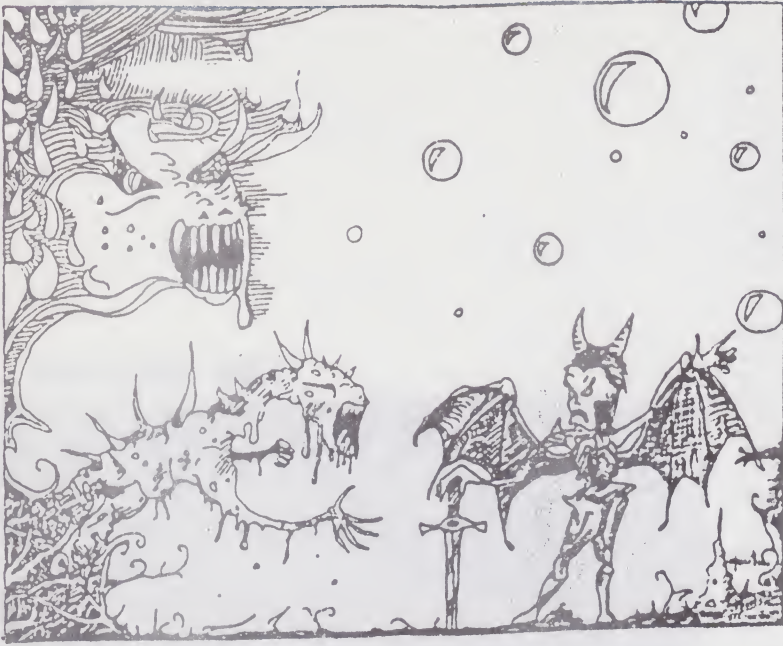
COMING ATTRACTIONS

Jim Mastro's Strange Cave will be at CBGB on February 19. Look for the imminent release of **Tiny Lights** new LP, **Hazel's Wreath**, and their record release party February 25 at **Siberia**. Ex-Love **Pusher Mick London** and his new band **Crocodile Shop** will be releasing their new album, **Lullaby**, on Minneapolis' **Susstone** label this Spring. **Coyote Records** has several projects in the works, including **Tim Lee of Windbreakers** fame in a solo project backed by **Faye Hunter**, **Doug Wygal**, and **Gene Holder**; the debut lp from **Speed The Plough** (with ex-Trypes **John Baumgartner**, **Toni Laperuta**, and **Marc Francia**, and ex-Paid Vacation **Jim DeRogatis**), and an LP by **The Wind** produced by **Chris Stamey**. Speaking of **Jim DeRogatis**, it looks like **Wire** will be back touring America this Spring, which can only mean another go-around for the **Ex-Lion Tamers**. South Jersey's **X-Men** will be recording their first vinyl for **Buy Our Records** but may have to release it under the name **Capo Regime**, unless **Buy Our Records** can convince **Marvel Comics** to release the rights to their mutant superheros' name.

JERSEY BEAT Confidential

Diary of a rock critter





by Bruce Lee Gallanter
TRANSMISSION (compilation cassette)
PO Box 1033, E. Stroudsburg, PA 18301

What few dreams I can remember are often plagued by varying levels of confusion...thoughts swirling, occasionally claustrophobic. The more unusual compilation cassettes around - this one in particular - have that same hazy feeling of listening in to a variety of thoughts. Although there are 20 tracks listed here by some 16 different entities, many of the stranger entries may be just one unit. The majority of this tape is often found sounds, creepy whispering and cheap manipulations. There are two actual bands whose tracks break up the haze, the Lab Rats and the Love Pushers. The recording quality is mostly cheesy, yet seems to add to the consistency of the overall sound.

The Lab Rats, who open & close Side 1, are your average metal/punk blatin' scrounge of ugliness. What power they might have life has been dissipated by cheap production, although it does add to the noise-blurring textures of compressed distortion.

Ironically enough, the only band to get 3 cuts is The Love Pushers, a name you should recognize as they consist of four one-time members of the Jersey Beat staff. Their tunes are the only ones attempting any sort of obvious melodies, and stand out as fresh air. "Eyes Of Elizabeth" is a lovely tune, but with bizarre production, off sync guitar and avant organ solo. "Just The Way" is one of those perfect pure-pop gems that Howard Wuelfing should continue to churn out. Great fuzz guitar by Mick London. Equally superb is "Out Of Tyme," a dynamo of power pop with fine vocals & more burning guitar by London; a gem & a good way to end the tape.

There seems to be a theme that threads its way thru most of this stuff; the stupidity of youth & manking in general, a dim view of the world, but not as oppressive as most industrial music can get. The threat is universal as well, since 2 contributions by a Yugoslavian unit fit in perfectly. Marzidovsek are most effective, with their spooky voice-of-oppression drone and electronic suspense. Their ranting preacher gone insane sounds most familiar.

Altho not all of these pieces work (a few are just dismal and aimless), there are two compositions which truly stand out: "Miles Away" explores ultra-selective TV sounds, slightly altered and reminiscent of the nightmarish confusion of "Revolution #9." Altho the scenario is hazy, I imagine the slyly humorous yet ironic point of burying the Beatles' "Piggies" in the background, as the cops come bursting in to a wild party of sexual & drug-induced abandon. Just who are the pigs here? Much more stark, but equally captivating, is a long piece by Mario The Gardener. The open spaces are Eno-like, with few elements involved. The one central rhythm is a slow single-note thud of an amplified cardboard tube (?), just the right beat & tone. On top is a naked voice shouting, "I'm inside you!"...a strange thought, yes? Occasionally 2 guitars buzz and punctuate. Mesmerizing throughout. "Transmission" is a one hour journey worthy of your inspection, fellow traveler.

JELLO BIAFRA

No More Cocoons - The Spoken Word Album
Alternative Tentacles

Brilliant. This man says what should be said about everything from censorship to Reagan. When I first heard about the possibility of this record, I was skeptical. Now I'm playing it all over the place.

UNJUST

Hammer Head
Big City

My very first impression of this record was "they sound just like Hirax." Well, if anyone ever heard Hirax, the vocals are exactly the same...only difference is the style's a little better here. Musically, this band is a bit better although they're not top-notch thrash. They could get to be known if the right people catch onto them.

BLOODFEAST

Face Fate
New Renaissance

From the streets of Bayonne, these 5 guys come bolting forward, leaving their first LP facing up to the fact that it's been bettered. The new recordings of "Vampire" and "RIP," a remixed version of "Bloodlust," and the lone new song, "Face Fate," clearly show Bloodfeast to be one of the top metal bands to come out of NJ. I said last time that their production made them good because it rocked. Well, now the production and budget are even better and they rule.

- Mike Aiello

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YOU GET FROM PLAYING YOUR
GUITAR TOO HARD"

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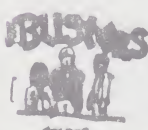
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One w/ mustard & relish to go

by Bruce Lee Gallanter

It feels rather odd to be the only one of my friends to really dig Yo La Tengo. Some folks just can't hear what it is that's special about Ira Kaplan's voice & guitar. And now that they've lost all 3 (different) lead guitarists (each of whom - from Dave Schramm to Dave Rick to Chris Stamey - changed the overall sound of the band) and are currently touring as a trio, I wondered if they could really pull it off. I shouldn't have bothered worrying. The proof is in the pudding, and the pudding is this mostly great LP of theirs, New Wave Hot Dogs.

Yo La Tengo's 2nd album is (mostly) a superb release, even with the ridiculous title, a definite growth & extension of last year's fine debut, Ride The Tiger. The new LP is just as diverse, going from subtle angelic purity to even more twisted guitar passages (this time provided by Ira himself). Chris Stamey only appears (on guitar) on two cuts, while Dave Rick is featured on one. In order to fully appreciate the wide spectrum of moods & emotions stirred up by this LP, I put together a tape of its tunes, arranged from mellowest to the most intense, eliminating the only song that doesn't knock me out ("Did I Tell You?") and substituting the band's only other '87 release, the non-LP single, "Asparagus Song" (backed with a cover of Neil Young's "For The Turnstiles"). That single was an excellent release also.

The album commences with "Lost In Bessemer," with its short, lovely instrumental intro, semi-acoustic guitars, tasty minimal organ, and harmonica. Refreshingly innocent & delicate. Not yet completely awake, "No Water" sweeps gently in, like a soothing yawn, vocals floating softly in a warm haze, Stamey's exquisite guitar shimmers sweet notes in a dream-like breeze...

There is a series of circular/cyclical hypnotic chords that seem to be at the center of the magic which emanates from the family of bands based around the Feelies (Trypes, Yung Wu, etc.), and the influence of this sound is apparent on a few of Yo La Tengo's tunes. The warmly melodic folk/rock piece, "3 Blocks From Groove Street," is one such. Fine female backing vocals add another nice flourish. The lyric, "He wandered away from his nothing life" fuels an effective image.

"Lewis" brings the band's positive energy more into focus. These memorable, ringing bass/guitar riffs are like early R.E.M., a hook that won't let go until Stamey lets loose a slightly fractured solo near the end...knocking us a bit off balance. Nice move.

One of this LP's two covers is an obscure Velvets tune called "It's Alright (the way that you live)." True to Lou Reed's original deadpan delivery, Ira also keeps the emotions bottled up, like an uncaring ghost distantly approving of someone else's lifestyle. Even the background guitar distortion at the end seems indistinct and hazy. The emotion of ice is something the Velvets' Nico exemplified, and seems a direct antecedent of this version.

Then amazing, godlike, garage double-guitars (both Ira's) start to really kick in on "Clunk." Although that gripping riff sounds dangerously close to "Don't Fear The Reaper," the vocals come from that bent-toned school of Patti Smith or Television. Them doubled guitars get the blood pumping, attacking our senses ala' Dream Syndicate. Guitars howling fierce fire. "There is a waitress who admits she's wrong," steams Ira...certain vocal lines seem to stand out, pulling together threads of understanding, not unlike Neil Young's poetic ambiguity.

IRA KAPLAN



photo by Andy Peters



Continued on next page

Yo La Tengo's New Wave Hot Dogs

Guitars build & chime, ring & shine even more on "A Shy Dog." There is always that central riff, rocking and propelling each tune, each one pulling us into the current, the flow of life/juice/energy, transmitted through waves of sound. While the lyric questions being able to gather enough nerve to fight, force pushes us into a storm, sink or swim, be moved or play dead, pure & simple...

"House Fall Down" is the point of no return. Clanging, twisted guitars start to torture each other, fragmented slivers spew everywhere; as Ira breaks loose, the vocals get even more bent. As the brew thickens, old fans cry for help and curse the forefathers of guitar noise - Sonic Youth! This piece is very short, but no less threatening. It is getting more & more difficult to penetrate the dense buzz, so be prepared...

The smoking rhythm team of Steve Wichniewski's throbbing close-to-fuzz bass and thick pounding tomtoms of Georgia Hubley are the central force at work in "Serpentine." It is garage heaven with a basically 60's rocking drone of guitar/organ energy, a solid mass overpowering that beat. Watch out!

The other cover tune here is even more obscure & entitled, ironically enough, "Let's Compromise," by the late 70's NYC noise outfit, Information. There ain't no compromise here. Guest guitar strangler Dave Rick of Phantom Tollbooth and Ira together provide a dense mass of mutant guitar insanity...thick, ugly & scary, just too much. The true howling, with no let up in sight.

The appropriate climax is entitled "The Story of Jazz" and it's most definitely story-like, yet it's rather difficult to pinpoint the action taking place in the lyrics. Them troubled doubled guitars are all-encompassing, so easy to get lost... Much fuzzed guitars telling their stories, the feedback beast in the desert of open minds. So open up & get ready...and check 'em out live too!





Grot

Music

Art #2

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Reviews

WOODEN SOLDIERS
Punks & Rubber Men, LP
Absolute A Go Go

"I've got a bike, it's yellow/but I don't know what to do/I'd give you a ride on it/but it's got a flat (boo hoo)/and here I've got something that I've never seen before/we used to go and golf with it/and I'd yell 'fore!'." Despite a nice acoustic guitar solo and an imitation Feelies sound, these quote should tell you these guys are pretty weak when it comes to lyrics. They don't have much original insight to offer, and what they do say is pretty cliched. "Henry David Thoreau" and "Pitchfork" are each a nice hybrid of C&W and Polka, but not a patch on Brave Combo. "The Highway Calling" sounds like the Feelies again, and "Commercial Avenue" is a bit of funk in French. Much as I dislike bad-mouthing local guys who are trying to do something original, Wooden Soldiers are competent musically, less than competent vocally, and really derivative in the lyrics dept. Borrow before buying.

- Chris Friedrich, Ph.D.

THIS COMP SUCKS (Cassette)
& Bob Conrad, 1601 Scenic Dr.,
W.Trenton, NJ 08628

Another great comp from This Zine Sucks, with standout cuts from Stumbling Way, Mechanical Bride, and Sacred Death. Loser cuts belong to Chemical Waste's generic thrashcore, and the jury is still out on Fugue Youth, some sort of speedcore parody apparently perpetrated by 11 year olds. Other bands include the Blisters, Crucial Youth, Misfortunes Of Virtue, Hollowbody, and Chronic Fear.

- J.T.

LUCKY 7

Get Lucky, LP
I.E. Records, Box 2121, San Francisco, CA 94126
This great debut LP from former Mink Deville members is an infectious combination of R'n'B, boogie-woogie, Zydeco, Cajun, Texas two-step, C&W, and basic rock'n'roll. "Rosalie" begins the LP with an accordion and a r'n'r sound not much different from the late, lamented Blasters. "Cajun Man" is a Zydeco/Two-Step stomper, while "Rock'n'Roll" transplants the riff from Eddie Cochran's "Something Else" onto the chord progressions from Dave Dudley's "Six Days On The Road." Bob Dyland's "Only A Hobo" gets an interesting arrangement featuring Scottish military drumming. The best choice for a single is "It's Only Love" (not the Beatles' tune) which has the most complex production and added percussion. Almost all the songs here are originals, and these guys have absorbed all sorts of American musical styles. This album should be checked out by anyone who appreciates the Blasters or Los Lobos.

- Dr. Chris Friedrich



by Nitti Bahr

Destroy All Bands suck. They are absolutely the most insipid, repulsive, phlegm-spitting excuse for a group this scene has witnessed since G.G. Allin. They suck so bad that they just might be the best unsigned band from the Garden State. Destroy All Bands don't care. They are so unmotivated and capricious that they could very well be the next band to turn the scene upside-down and tear it limb from limb. It's Destroy All Bands. It's a machine. It's that disgusting seabound barge of putrefying trash that ping-ponged back & forth from Jersey to New York, that no sane place would dare to call its own. It's tomorrow afternoon's half-buzzed hangover that a handful of aspirin can only enhance. It's the 20-year old beer-drenched blood-stained biker jacket you found near the waste treatment plant on the Garden State Parkway. It's....

Swinger McRaftervocals
James Spider Webb.....guitar
Bella Lakarloff.....bass
Tommy Sandigo.....drums

Why do you call yourselves Destroy All Bands?

Swinger McRafter - Ok, we were in a car one night going to our first show at the Court Tavern. We were booked under the name "Kramden's Delicious Marsall" [from the Honeymooners episode in which Ralph tries to sell dogfood as a miracle appetizer]. So we get there and we're tearing into the Old Milwaukee and Scotch, and our guitarist Spider Webb and I were sitting there, and I tell him that we were gonna get blown away by the headlining band, and he says, "Shit no, we're gonna destroy 'em. That's our mission in life, to destroy all bands!" and I said, "That's it, Destroy All Bands! That's us. Destroy All Bands!...And that's what we ended up calling ourselves.

That's a real interesting story or a damn good lie.

S.M. It could be a lie.

So other than the Court Tavern, what other places have you been able to play?

S.M. Well, City Gardens was kind enough to let us play there, but they weren't too kind about letting us bring in our own beer or paying us. (In walks Rock N Roll Bob from Genocide.)

S.M. Hey, Bob, I hear you got in a bit of a scuffle last night.

Bob Yeah, I went to Ebz's fucking girlfriend's house.

S.M. I know, she calls me at 4:30 in the morning screaming about it and I'm half asleep.

Bob Yeah, these guys are standing outside and trying to start shit with me, so I say "Fuck you" and the next thing I know I'm on the fucking ground, I got blood gushing out of my nose, and my throat's all bruised up. I don't even know how many guys there were.

S.M. She says there were three.

Bob Well, anyway, I'm gonna get a beer. I'll see ya's later.

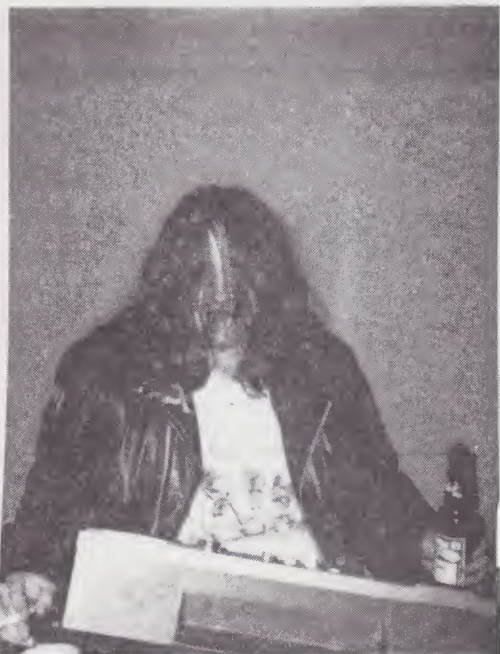
This could turn out to be a very difficult interview. It's hard to ask serious questions under these circumstances.

S.M. We're not a very serious band, any band that writes songs like "You Raped My Kid" can't be taken very seriously.

That's a classic song!

S.M. I gotta give credit to Dave GooGooMuck who wrote that.

Destroy All Interviews Swinger McRafter gets Blistered; film at eleven



Continued on next page

Who writes most of your material?

S.M. Well, we all pitch in. I go and write as many songs as I can. Being the singer, you'd figure it would be my only other job besides making an ass out of myself on stage [which he does pretty well]. We have nothing to hide. I'll be the first to admit I got a golden shower from a 43 year old grandmother on stage in front of a packed Saturday night crowd.

You must have been offended. I mean, it wasn't planned.

S.M. I was more horrified than offended! I talked to her after the show only to find that she was upset with me when I told her I didn't appreciate her actions! Hey, where's her morals?

It's a sick America.

S.M. What else can we talk about?

Musical influences.

S.M. Well, my favorite bands are Aerosmith, Minor Threat, Ramones...

What did you think of the new Ramones album?

S.M. I didn't care for Animal Boy, but the new one's much better. I haven't seen them in years. To tell you the truth, I haven't seen many live shows in a long time. I just sit around and drink like a fish and listen to my Aerosmith albums. It's disgusting!

You guys are disgusting.

S.M. It's horrible.

You're bums

S.M. Slobs

Do you get dates?

S.M. Certainly not with 43 year olds. The only dates we get are with 16 year olds because it only takes 2 beers and a few Jimmy Dean lines you can take full advantage of them. I don't have to explain.

If you're a potty-trained 16-year old and need a date for the Junior High prom, please write:

Swinger McRafter
15 Herbert Ave.
Spotswood, NJ 08884

DESTROY ALL FACTS

1. The members of Destroy All Bands make more money from the band than they do from their day jobs...and they play on the average of once every two months or so.
2. Swinger McRafter's brothers grew up to be healthy, intelligent, responsible young adults.
3. Destroy All Bands is not signed to SST Records.
4. Guitarist James Spider Webb did graduate high school.
5. Rock N Roll Bob does not play in Destroy All Bands.
6. If Swinger McRafter is sober, and the P.A. system is at a reasonable decibel level, you might be able to decipher some of the words to their songs at a given show. But don't count on it.
7. Swinger McRafter is on a diet (...liquid diet, Old Milwaukee and Dab's Beer).

DESTROY ALL LYRICS

I'M SICK OF WORKING

Watching all the tramps
from behind stand
all walking with their main man
this mall is full of sluts
I feel the pressure building in my
nuts.

YOU RAPED MY KID

I know you laugh
I know you laugh
But something here inside me says
you're not gonna laugh
You beat my wife
that's not all you did
My lawyer had a heart attack, you
raped my kid.

For 7-song demo, write to Destroy
All Bands, 15 Herbert Avenue,
Spotswood, NJ 08884.



by Dave Run It

About Verbal Assault, Jim Testa once said, "The only good thing to come out of Boston was the turnpike headed south to New Jersey"¹ -- but since Verbal Assault come from Rhode Island, not Boston, they're a good thing and I can still write about them here. Or as Chris Jones, singer for Verbal Assault, once said to Jim Testa: "New Jersey is going to hell, so fuck you."²

Verbal Assault's new LP, Trial, marks their continuing musical progression that will undoubtedly one day bring them straight to the top.³ Recorded in mid-1987, Trial succeeds in combining the intensity of hardcore with the slower melodic structures of hard rock, leading some people⁴ to describe Verbal Assault's sound as "heavy, but not metal." (Guitarist Pete Chramiec writes most of the music for the band, but that's still not enough for him to get mentioned in this article.) Not surprisingly, the band lists the Bad Brains as probably their biggest musical influence, and the Bad Brains' Dr. Know even offered to produce their LP and get it released on SST; but the band declined, giving "we don't want to have to be on one of those awful Chemical Imbalance singles" as the reason for their decision.⁵ Eventually, the band settled to have Trial released on Giant Records, where they have already become the 2nd-fastest selling act on the label after Indestructible Noise Command.⁶

Since recording the LP, Verbal Assault have added Tom and Chris Gorman ("the two blond guys from ABBA") as new members on bass & drums, giving the band a more positive, youthfully Aryan appearance without slowing down their live presentation or musical progression one bit. Chris Jones (who also publishes Boner magazine) has stated that Verbal Assault plan to incorporate even more elaborate moves into their performances, including an intricate "suicidal/mime image" where the band comes out all in whiteface to sit on four stools and mime their entire set in tragic mode without any instruments, in an attempt to frustrate their audience.⁸ Other plans include killing Chris and dumping his body into Newport Sound, since he comes up with too many stupid ideas.

Note: This article was written after Verbal Assault had left for a three-month tour of Europe supporting Frehley's Comet, making it impossible to verify several tiny details.⁹



CHRISTOPHER JONES
"New suicidal mime image"

**VERBAL
ASSAULT**
Just the facts...

Footnotes

¹ At least he could've said that.

² Quote lifted from Modern Bodybuilding & Skateboarding Monthly magazine. Thanks, Javi.

³ Maybe.

⁴ Nobody that we know.

⁵ Would I lie to you? ⁷

⁶ Never mind.

⁷ Yes.

⁸ This is true.

⁹ Like I care.



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Eh, Giuseppe...

I gots me dis pwoblum, sees. Dis ear chick I takes to a fukkin' patty donna wanna fuck...Sos I says to er, I says, aint youse even 'gonna give me no blow job? An she starts cryin'. I don't get it man...ah spens money on er and don' gets no fukkin' blo. Wha gives?

Vinnie

Yo, Vin,

Whatta youse, som kinda pussy or somethin'? Jump the fukkin' bitch...if she gives youse no lip, slap er aroun' a liddle, chicks like tha kinda shit.

Dear Mr. Anarchist,

Is eating tortilla chips and peanut butter dangerous to your health?

Sue Love



Dear Love,

That's so absurd I had to try it. I experimented with a couple of friends and nothing happened. We liked it and did it again & again. Still no harmful effects, except for the fact that we are doing it 4 or 5 times a day and I can't stop touching my nipples.

Dear Yosi,

I'm 14 and I got some real problems. My Mom works 3 jobs and my Dad just sits around the house and drinks all day long. Whenever he feels like it, he gets up and beats me. I'm new in town, I got no friends. I'm so lonely I just want to die. Help! What am I going to do?

Desperate

Dear Desperate,

Shit, that's easy! Wipe your nose. Kill your parents.

You're not desperate, you're stupid!

Dear Anarchist,

Why do they let you do this column? You're not funny!
(about 20 letters a week)

To all concerned:

I am too funny! Besides, I grant the editor sexual favors.

Love,

Yosi

P.S. Anybody want to start a fan club?

RICHARD LLOYD

Real Time, LP

Celluloid Records

"Aw, you've got to see 'm LIVE!..." It may be an overdone phrase, often a coverup for past studio failures, but in Richard Lloyd's case, it's been the best kind of compliment. As exciting as last year's comeback solo LP, Fields Of Fire, was for Lloyd's long-neglected fans, there was a special sensation about seeing this ex-Television guitarist, who'd seen the hells of drug addiction and come back looking & sounding stronger and healthier than before. And the idea behind Real Time was sound: give the fans an assortment of live tunes from the good 'n bad old days, plus some new material.

The execution, sad to report, is something else again. I was there last April for one of the two CBGB sets Lloyd taped for this album, and the playing was just too deliberate and calculated to work. Match, word had it that the prior night's festivities had been a bit wild and sloppy, with some technical recording glitches, and they just had this one other chance to get it down right.

Oh, it sounds fine. For the uninitiated, it's a credible introduction. Plus, his singing (esp. on slower numbers like "Lost Child" and "Pleading") is clean and on the mark, and his guitar still stings. But at Lloyd's best, his guitar establishes a direct link with your involuntary reflexes, and the riffs ring through your brain for days. Case in point - his centerpiece solo on "Field Of Fire." At a sweaty Maxwells gig last year, music & message became one, and as he screamed, "And I ain't gonna add no fuel, darling, to the funeral pyre," his long, hard trip back seemed worth all the difficulty and heartache. But lest you forget just how difficult it can be to make it back in the real world, he'd unleash a furious, positively **ANGRY** solo that went on and on and, once finished, made you hunger for more.

Those raw emotions are nowhere to be found here. Compared to what it should've been, I'm afraid Real Time is real lame.

- Dirk Bender



THE ASTORIANS

Guffahw, LP

Peg In Hole, 167 12 St., Brooklyn, NY 11215

Astor Place is the nearest subway stop to NYU's campus in Greenwich Village, a community that's given birth to many bands like the Astorians: young, guitar-based club-rockers who have evolved naturally from the NY school of Max's Kansas City and CBGB Punk. This 7-song platter is a fine introduction to their oeuvre, including a clever song about the ways in which life in NYC can revolve around an apartment, and a hot live track (from, where else, CBGB). Check 'em out.

- J.T.

BIG RED

Deeper And Darker, EP

PO Box 275, Cranbury, NJ 08512

This 6-song 12-inch introductes Big Red, a talented young Jersey band with a muscular, hard-rock sound. Jay Schreiber keeps his guitar under control, exploding into a frenzied metallish solo only now & then, which lets the songs retain a powerful pop-rush without going over the deep end into bludgeoning power-chord ROCK. The songwriting here is way above average, and the performances pack enough energy to make me eager to see the band live.

- J.T.

DINOSAUR

DINOSAUR

You're Living All Over Me, LP
SST

Quite possibly my favorite album of 1987: Played it to death, done wore out my cassette copy. This immensely hard-rockin' trio, transplanted from Boston to Brooklyn, are always hellbent on frying our ears live - loud beyond sanity. This LP really captures their unique blend of impossibly thick, hard-strumming, ball-busting lead guitar and that throttling, thick rhythm team. This music has been my close companion, because it overwhelms the senses, like being suspended in a vat of warm gelatin, oozing all over. There is infinite sadness in the almost/occasionally buried vocals. Memories of going to the beach one overcast late-Sunday afternoon, with a half dozen psychedelized musical buddies, bathing our minds & bodies with the enchanting sounds of the waves, the wind, and the ultimate in distortion - this is DINOSAUR.

Lyrical & vocally, this LP really hits home, with songs mostly about the difficulty of connecting with someone. Very few words, simply yet convincingly direct. A Neil Young influence is apparent & twofold: a fragile voice, mildly bent in tone, about to crack at any moment, is surrounded by a vast dark swamp of sound. All guitar solos are perfect extensions of that vocal pleading, each solo climaxing with the best eruption/orgasm/release - it's all there.

What I find most interesting about this group is how they make one redefine what it is exactly they supposedly like & dislike. In some distant way, this is similar to (the worst excesses of) Blue Cheer and Mountain. "Sludgfeast" actually sounds like Black Sabbath, and I have always hated them, but this is just way too fucking good! That guitar is too much - too ugly, too nasty, putting our ears through the grinder. Yet it's undeniably magnetic in nature.

Yet as dark & dense as Dinosaur often is, there are moments when they really lighten up. In "The Lung," "Raisan," and "In A Jar," there is this odd beauty to the melodic bass glowing at the center, with positive vocals sailing on top, whilst the blistering distortion stays under control for a change.

My favorite is "Tarpit," one of the saddest songs I've ever reckoned with. It's so emotionally draining & overwhelming that when they did it live at the Court Tavern not too long ago, I actually acted out the words, while being transfixed - staring at this woman in front of me who I've secretly desired for years. Chanting these words - "Thought I knew you, reached out my hand, I wish that you could understand..." Most poignant, powerful, and gripping! Need I say more?!?!

- Bruce Lee Gallanter



COLD-IRON



SKATE
REPORT

Vermin From Venus "Attack Of The Killer Virgin Prom Queen" EP repeat everything they say twice. Kinda like World Of Distortion, whose EP just sucks. One of these bands are gonna do the next milk commercial. Hickoids "Hardcorn" single sucks, it's country. Premature Babys "Cheat And Steal" EP has more guys who don't eat meat or make any money. Depression Records' best singer sounds like the dude from the In'bred, which is cool. Pailhead "I Will Refuse" 45 is cool, sounds like Ian MacKaye gets high with the Butthole Surfers and sings about political entropy. But Pailhead's from Chicago and they're into violence, so there's no way. Vomit Spots "Nina Hagen Dazs" EP is fun, glanky, fuckin' major league cool, buy this one, baby. New York City Hardcore 1987 Together EP is a pos-o-type compilation with Gorilla Biscuits, who sound like Bold, who sound like Youth Of Today, who sound like Sick Of It All, who sound like Side By Side, who really suck. It's really cool that all these guys preach the patriotic trustworthy thing but I still wouldn't let these hoodlums into my store. White Flag Wild Kingdom LP - pretty ok stuff, sounds a little too much like the Descendents, so they're probably making fun of them now, and they're on Positive Force and they dress like the Cure, so you figure that one.

THE GREAT SCOUTS

"Diamond Boat"/"Camouflage"/"1'00"
57 Stanton St., NYC 10002
"Diamond Boat" is what a lot of people wish "Ideal Copy" had sounded like - Wire's experimental rhythms and guitar textures updated to the post-industrial, post-hardcore 80's. The A-side is definitely farther out on the edge than the two cuts on the B-side, which tend to be more conventional grunge/sludge rock in the Homestead style. Another trait the Great Scouts share with Wire is brevity; by making their songs unusually short, they make them seem even more fascinating. Lots of potential here, let's hope it develops.

NAKED RAYGUN

"Vanilla Blue"/"Slim"
Box 148593, Chicago, IL 60614
It don't get much better than this A-side, catchier and less abrasive than most of their Homestead stuff, still from the Loud, Fast Rules school. The B-side is a weird novelty dub paying tribute to Slim Pickens, cowboy star.

THE UNTOLD FABLES

7-inch EP
Dionysus, Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91507
I had hoped this kind of slavish revivalism had died 2 years ago, but these paisley'd cretins are still grinding out the same 3 ideas (and chords) that make every Voxx/Pop "60's band" such an enormous bore.

FUDGETUNNEL

"Little Red Fire Engine"/"Beating"
Underdog, Box 14182, Chicago, IL 60614
Quite a change of pace for this mostly-hardcore label, a garagey and definitely 60's-influenced band with a delightfully twisted edge. Exactly the sort of pop revisionism that characterized the earliest CBGB punks (Television, Marbles, T-Heads). I'd love to catch a whole set of this stuff.

SINGLES

"The Berry Pickers EP"

Dionysus
...as in Chuck Berry. You can't go wrong with a sound this simple. You just can't. Go Johnny Go.

DANGTRIPPERS

"Incantation"/"Big Fear"
South East, 208 E. Davenport, Iowa City, IA 52240
Oh boy, another band that sounds like R.E.M.

THE LADDS FROM BELLEVUE'

"Relative Distance"/"Till The Stroke Of Dawn", Stanton Park, Box 58, Newtownville, MA 02160
A band that only plays obscure covers of totally forgotten New England garage-band combos. What a concept. What a waste of time.

BIG BLACK

"He's A Whore"/"The Model"
Touch & Go
God, these guys went out in style. Maybe their best LP ever and this brilliant and uproariously conceived 45: Big Black does Cheap Trick and Kraftwerk, right down to dressing up like the bands on the pic sleeve. A guaranteed collector's item. Get this.

GG ALLIN & HIS HULA GIRLS

You Give Love A Bad Name, LP
Fountain of Youth

This serious musical offering comes as quite a surprise as it differs greatly from the other offerings on this mostly-comedy label ("Dr. Demento's Lamentos, Pt. III," and "The Dick Gregory Gets Hung From A Tree In Buffalo" quadruple LP), and comes with a warning ("THIS RECORD SUCKS") printed on the cover. Which says even less for the label that would put out this kind of crap than it does for the queers who would actually buy it. I'm sorry, but whomever's responsible for this deserves to be pissed on one or three times.

(Address not elsewhere)

- DAVE RUN IT

DINOSAUR

You're Living All Over Me, LP
SST

Most awesome guitar barrage of the year after the Squirrel Bait LP - and "Lose" is the ninth or twelfth most bestest song ever... Dinosaur's live show is even better, esp. the part when J. Mascis throws a hi-hat at Lou, who swings his bass at J.'s head and then raises his fists saying, "Go ahead, hit me!" What a bunch of fun guys. And "Poledo" is like the 200th or 300th most bestest song ever.

- DAVE RUN IT

THE WILD STARES

Skorch Turth, LP

Birch, Box 101, Boston, MA 02134
This sounds so much like Mission Of Burma, you probably won't believe this isn't on Homestead. In fact, on first listen, you may not believe it's not the Volcano Suns.

- J.T.

EEZEEQUEEL & BLOODY BLOODSTONE

Lines Of Oppression, LP

Geke

Tempting cheesesteak con salsa confection from Zeke Zagar of Philadelphia's McRad, five loping reggaeish tunes. While these songs never strike the heady party groove I seek from most reggae, Zeke's warm and expressive vocals put this stuff across. Could use a little more bottom, though. McRad performs on "Never Give In."

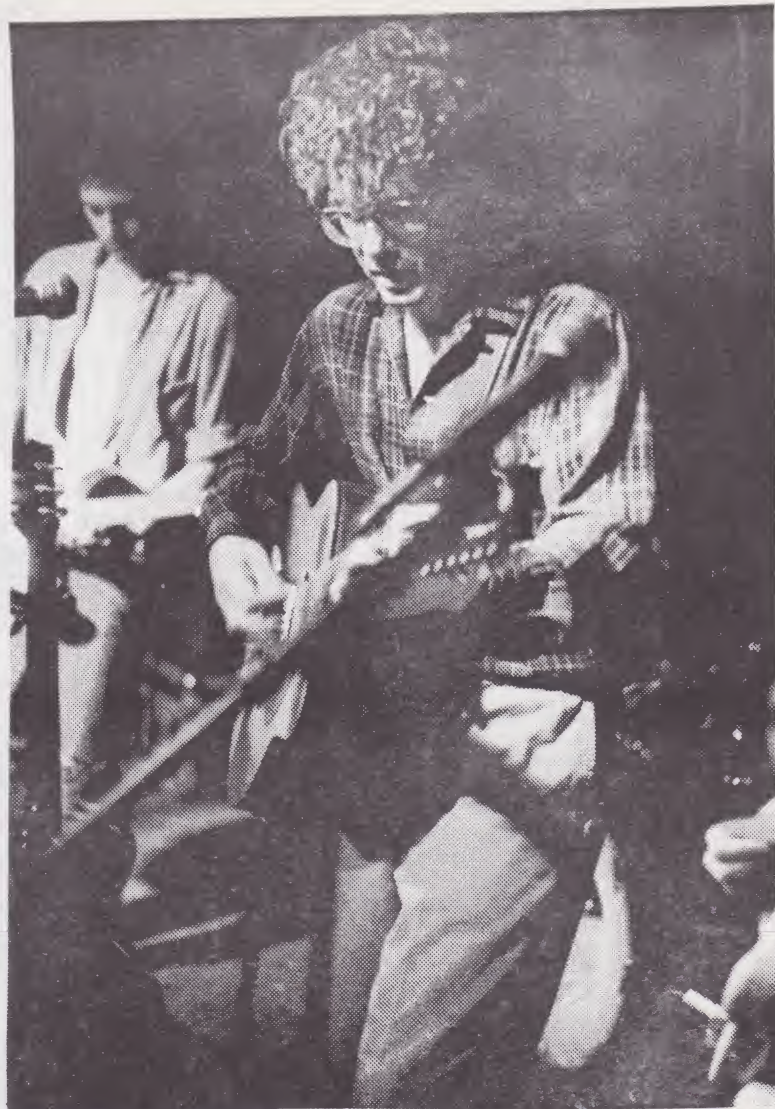
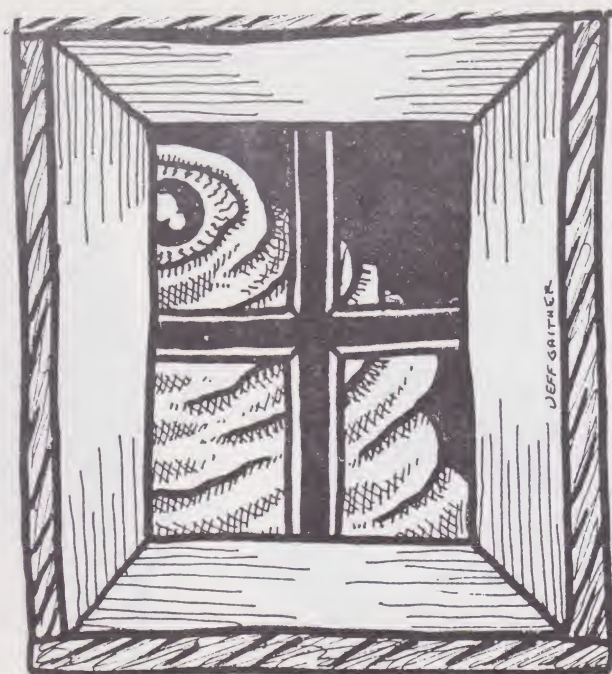
- Jim T.

PAY ATTENTION

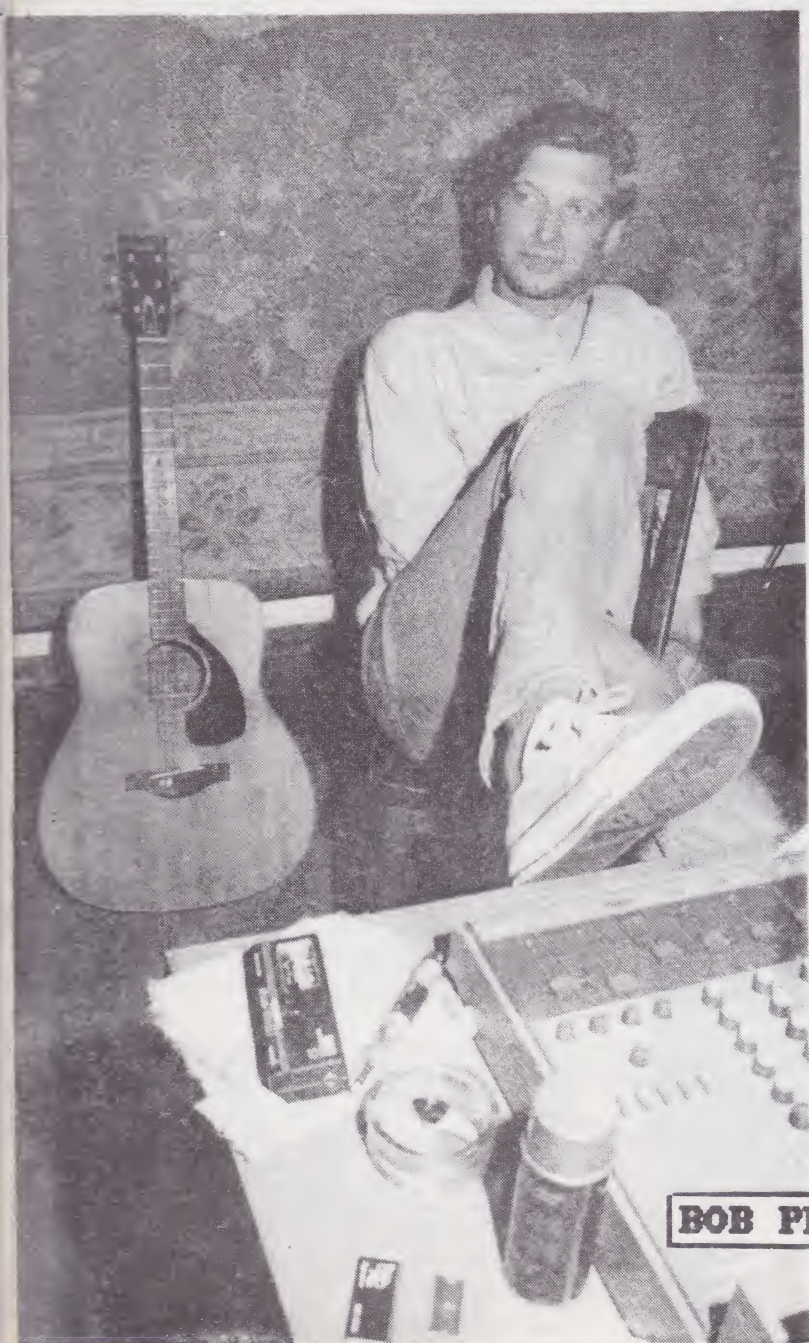
Klub Blaues Licht, LP
(Box 241, Villanova, PA 19085)

There's always been a problem with how to take Pay Attention - though they spring from the same underground circles that have yielded more alternative bands such as Trained Attack Dogs, Electric Love Muffin, and the Dead Milkmen, their music has always been more in keeping with the mainstream bands making the rounds in Philadelphia's cabarets. Listening to "Klub Blaues Licht" solves that problem, or at the very least, quiets it a bit. The music here smoothly blends alternative influences such as quirky rhythms, Celtic melodies, and garage-rock energy with an accessible approach to songwriting. The end result is music that should - and can - appeal to a wide variety of listeners. It illustrates that labels don't make the band, music does; and ought to be proof positive to those who are still wondering what to do with Pay Attention that the answer is clear: Listen to them.

- Carol Schutzbank



FEELIES



BOB PFEIFFER

1987

the
year
in
review

1987: What Happened?

The Feelies toured Europe, appeared in a major Hollywood movie, Something Wild, released an E.P., and performed locally fairly often, with red-hot sets full of promising new material. And, as always, they remained a better-kept secret to the world at large than the combination to Gorbachev's briefcase.

The biggest news in independent music in 1987 was simply that there was too much of it. Locally, we saw the debut recordings of Cost Of Living, They Might Be Giants, the Selves, Prong, Gut Bank, Band Of Susans, P.E.D., the Blisters, Lord John, Hugo Largo, Electric Love Muffin, Ruin, the Brandos, Homo Picnic, Pagan Babies, the Silos, Crocodile Shop, Figure Life Out, Raging Slab, and tons more, plus several compilations, about two million demo tapes, and a host of cassette-only releases from labels like ROIR and Bird O'Pray.

Bob Pfeiffer, the lead singer and head songwriter of Human Switchboard, staged an aborted comeback with the release of a well-received LP on Passport Records...which was almost immediately followed by Pfeiffer's departure for an A&R job in Los Angeles and his "retirement" from performing.

Keith Hartel replaced Jack Steeples as the bassist in Adrenalin O.D. for the band's cross-country summer tour. Locally, hardcore remained on the fringes, with most live performances relegated to all-ages matinees and most vinyl unheard on anything but the most adventurous college radio stations. College radio in general tightened playlists and tried to become more "professional," thus destroying whatever little value it offered as an alternative medium.



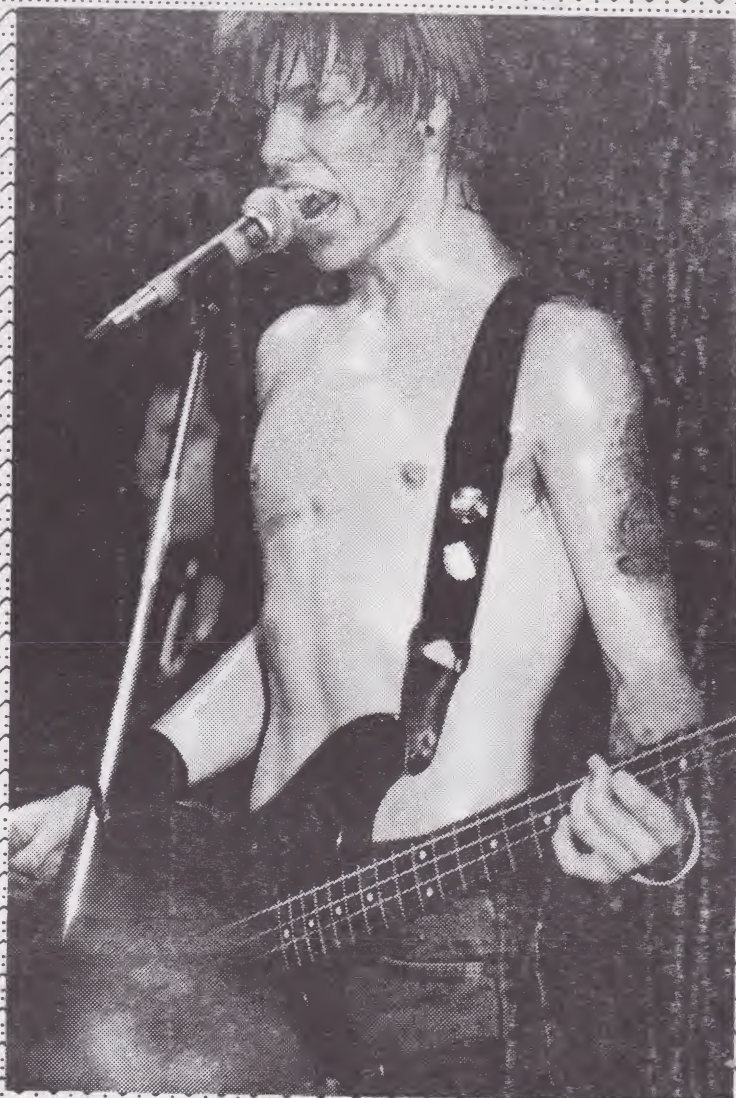
**Georgia Hubley
YO LA TENGO**



1986's Worst Trend - the gradual demise of Manhattan's club scene - actually reversed itself in 1987, with several small clubs opening (Siberia, Knitting Factory) and the Cat Club emerging as a viable band venue. A few live-music venues even popped up in Brooklyn. 1988 begins with The Big Combo - a much-missed series of Wednesday night shows that used to be held at Folk City - starting up again at Siberia. Three bands, early hours, intimate surroundings, and a low cover price make The Big Combo a much-needed and welcome addition to the live music scene hereabouts.

Speaking of the NY club scene, 1987 was the year of the Big Noise; in the late 70's, the Ramones spawned a legion of punk bands. In the late 80's, Sonic Youth emerged as the role model for New York bands, and a fusion of rock, punk, and dissonance became the sound of the moment, from bands like Live Skull, Phantom Tollbooth, White Zombie, and Prong.

ADRENALIN O.D.



**87's
BEST**



WHITE ZOMBIE



JERSEY BEAT

Benefit

SUNDAY

NOV. 15th



X-LION TAMERS



WEEN



CLEFT PALATE



SUBURBAN BOHEMIA

MAXWELL'S



BALLOON SQUAD

"Insurmountable Opportunities" cassette

In a more perfect world, I wouldn't be reviewing Balloon Squad's new demo cassette, but their debut album on some nice sexy New Wave label like I.R.S. Unfortunately, New Wave doesn't count for much in AORland these days, and there are only a few plucky stalwarts - the Cucumbers also come to mind - who keep the genre alive. Still, there's much to be said for short, concise, catchy pop tunes, imbued with sincerity and wit, delivered with a modicum of fuss. Who else but a New Wave band would come up with a title like "Beneath The Valley Of The Battle Of The Sexes," or turn it into an exceptionally good number about the mysteries of modern relationships (a recurring theme). Whether recalling the halcyon days of bubblegum pop (with Dave Clark 5 covers and their own sweetly romantic songs) or rescuing Husker Du's "Books About UFO's" from the fuzz/snarl dustbin, the Squad never loses sight of those paramount virtues - a good beat, words that mean something, good feelings. Citizen K's lead vocals and wraparound guitar (wrapped around every effects box known to modern man, and then some) float on top of Joe Merkle's bubbling bass (now here's the guy the dB's should've picked up when they needed a bassist) and harmony vocals, while Hugo Marco's light touch on drums percolates merrily underneath. Balloon Squad is a feel good, act nice, have fun kind of combo, totally out of synch with these gloomy days of noise/gloom/angst fusion; a fresh breath of Spring air in a winter of musty discontent. A band I like a lot, and wish many good things for.

- Jim T.

ALTER BOYS

Soul Desire, LP
Big Time

I was hoping that producer Andy Shernoff would unleash this scruffy NYC combo and come up The Alter Boys Go Girl Crazy!, a 1980's equivalent to Shernoff's Dictators debut of a dozen years ago. Instead, Shernoff packed up the band and took them to Lou Whitney's Column One Studios in Springfield, Missouri, softened all their rough edges and recorded all their slower songs. On the plus side, Shernoff's done a good job of capturing the interplay of guitar textures between J.Z. Barrell and Ed Bradin, and lead singer John Carruthers has never sounded better - in his vocals, at least, the band's hi-octane edge still performs at peak efficiency. At their best - on cuts like "Daily Word" and "Staring At The Walls" - the Alter Boys recapture the Velvets' combination of cool grooves and urban intensity, without parroting Lou Reed's nasal, Dylanesque delivery, and those are the qualities that make Soul Desire a pick hit.

But with some of the Alter Boys' hottest songs - most especially "Piles" - missing in action, the LP's not nearly as exciting as it should have been. Roger Rawling's drums sound blunted, and all the grungey fuzz and feedback have been bled out of the guitars. Next time, I hope they find a producer that lets them make more of a mess and is less interested in altering the garagey excitement of their sound in the name of mass market appeal.

- Jim Testa



Alter Boys

SCRAM

Stand Up, LP

BYO, Box 67A64, Los Angeles, CA 90067

This Philly trio manages to make the term "white reggae" not only acceptable but important. The band's politics are always at the forefront, informed by an admirable and articulate sense of morality. The band doesn't preach or rant, though; they let the peacefully swaying music - which combines both the beat of reggae with Matt Mungan's crisp and expressive pop vocal style - do the talking for them. You owe it to yourself to listen.

- J.T.

by Nitti Bahr

Green are a garage/pop band from Chicago who recently released their 2nd LP, Elaine MacKenzie, on Pravda Records. It's a solid followup to 1986's self-titled, self-produced Green LP, with a few notable changes. Like the first record, Elaine MacKenzie is heavy on the 60's influences. There's a lot of Yardbirds and early Beatles here. This isn't to say that Green are hopelessly nostalgic. "Up All Night" and "She's An Addiction" kick the album off to a rockin' start with sounds comparable to more contemporary bands like the Replacements or Lyres. Singer/songwriter/guitarist Jeff Lescher knows (and is not afraid) to slow things down either, and proves it once again with the Motown- flavored "She Was My Girl," "Don't Ever Fall In Love," and possibly the best song on the record, "I Know, I Know." It seems that Jeff and new band members Ken Kurson (bass,vocals) and Rich Clifton (drums) dip a little too deeply into the psychedelic/noise puddle for me this time, with strange but true tunes like "Heavy Metal Kids" and "My Love's On Fire." These two definitely represent the weakest cuts on the new slab. Other than that, Elaine MacKenzie is a brilliant LP which also includes surprise cuts by bassist/singer Ken Kurson, who's also in Chicago's Circles. Ken tears through two high-powered rockers which just might convince Punk Rock dinosaurs like The Clash and RAMONES to finally hang up their rock 'n roll sneakers. My advice? Spend some green, buy some Green. You can write to the boys at: Green Int'l Fan Club, PO Box 268043, Chicago, IL 60626.



Green were interviewed at the Court Tavern in December, '87. Special thanks goes to Dave Taylor, who helped in formulating and asking some of these questions. Picture this.

Jeff (to Rich): You better talk in this one.

Grot: So what's up with this tour?

Rich: It's basically a 3-week East Coast tour with dates as far north as Boston, south to Baltimore, and back west to Chicago.

Grot: You guys have done the West Coast too, right?

Jeff: Yep, 4 books.

Grot: But that was with the ex-members, back in '85. What are the main reasons they're not in the band anymore?

Jeff: After we put out our last album, we were all broke from the expense of touring and losing our jobs. But I had explained to them long before, that if we put out an album, it would mean a full commitment to touring and they just thought it wouldn't work and didn't want to quit their jobs and other commitments.

Grot: Then you got these guys.

Jeff: Yea, right.

Grot: And Ken was in The Circles. I was a big fan of the allmighty Circles.

Ken: That's right, Nitti.

Grot: Are the Circles still around?

Ken: No, the Circles are no longer together. We put out two demos and then I joined Green. We (Green) play "Fingerprints" and "Beaten Into Submission" [from the Circles' set] and they're on the new album.

Grot: Any covers?

Ken: Not on the album.

Grot: When did you record this one?

Jeff: We did it from mid-August to mid-September.

Grot (Dave): What are your more recent musical influences?

Ken (to Jeff): You like the Kinks?

Jeff: Yea, and that new XTC, Skylarking. And Pet Sounds [Beach Boys].

Grot: How will the recent Reagan/ Gorbachev summit affect the direction of Green?

Ken: We're gonna change our name to Red.

Grot: Why do you call yourselves Green anyway?

Jeff: Cause Green doesn't strike you as any particular type of music.

Grot: And no "The" before "Green"

Jeff: Yea, no "The". What do you think of the new album cover?



What's loud
and green and
has six legs?

Grot: It's pretty non-descript, just like the name.

Ken: But it is arresting. Does it grab you?

Jeff: You can't get arrested for grabbing people.

Rich: It's a masterpiece! Look at it.

Grot: It's pretty cool...but real Hoboken-y. Let's take some pictures.

Ken: Are we done then?

Grot: Yea, I guess. Any closing comments?

Jeff: Buy the album.

Rich: Wait, I need a mirror.



BUTCH HANUS & THE HOLY HANDGRENADES (CASSETTE)
PO Box 348, Hawthorne, NJ 07507

Then Jersey-bred industrial music specialists just keep crawling out of the woodwork. First there was SMERSH, then Brain Vacation, Amor Fati, and Cleft Palate, all masters of sludge darkness. Here comes another contender - Butch Hanus & HHG, featuring (rumor has it) Davoid, drummer for Wasserman Love Puddle, 1 1/2 Minute Shower, and Asbestos...a long line of strange bands who hover around the Hawthorne, NJ, area of our mutated Garden State.

Once again, low-budget technology has brought us to a point where practically any musician with an active imagination can do a complete solo tape, most inexpensively. All that's needed is a cheap drum machine, and a handful of distortion devices for guitar, bass, and vocals. Not instant SMERSH, perhaps, but time & patience have pulled off a distinctively dense offering.

Speaking of SMERSH, on this tape too just about everything in the mix is extremely distorted - layers of densely distorted guitars, bass, drum machine and vocals. The vocals, in particular, often sound totally alien, most difficult to comprehend at times. The varied layers make it a fascinating but confusing game of trying to figure out the separate sources.

"Banging" has a mutant surf beat, sort of like the Residents doing the Ramones. "Arizona" throbs with messy splashes of guitar noise. That bizarre hypnotic sludge/space groove is both alluring & repelling. It makes us question the fine line between too much & just enough...weirdness.

Relatively short but no less shocking is "Forever This Way," a vast wall of oddly processed vocal noise mixed with occasionally recognizable string strangulation...like a collection of confused memories, impossibly thick with information...but hopefully not "forever this way." The 3-part "Tec No Fears" is fairly long, each section unique. Part 1 is soft, minimal, with (get this) clear vocals and a cheap synth background rumble. Part 2 is a Chrome-like instrumental with a controlling machine-drum beat, with various levels of distortion as its central theme.

Part 3 is the strangest, the bass glowing at the bottom of the brew, bubbling & swimming through the mess. A mesmerizing bass riff finally appears, a metallic/demonic presence that's somehow soothing as well. This gives shape to the alien scenery, a sleeping monster that eventually awakes...fear sets in, the walls get closer...

The tape comes with a nice cover to boot (graphics obviously by Davoid), as are those that accompany this article. Check this out.

- Rockin' Rollo Gallanter

SPIRAL JETTY



**SPIRAL
JETTY**

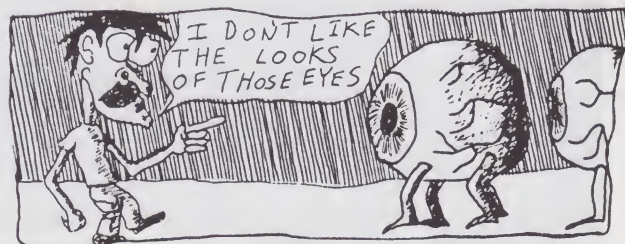
art's
sand
bar

Spiral Jetty's
New LP with
12 songs



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TMA

Beach Party 2000, LP
 Jimboco/ILA, Box 594M, Bay Shore, NY 11706
 In the 5 years since TMA first surfaced on the Dirt Club's wonderfully innocent and garagey Hardcore Takes Over compilation, flailing away with Punk Rock abandon and total musical incompetence on trashrock classics like "I'm In Love With Nancy Reagan," they've kept a low profile and spent their time honing their chops. The band on Beach Party 2000 not only knows how to write songs - that only takes 3 chords and a little originality - but how to put them together. The writing, playing, and production here have advanced lightyears over even the band's 1983 LP, What's For Dinner. Now a trio, the rhythm team of Al on drums and Tom on bass provide so fluid and effortless a backbeat to the forceful, driving frenzy of this music that you never notice how fast they're going. TMA music isn't hardcore; it doesn't mosh or throttle you with rabbit punches to the throat. It buzzes and hums, purrs and whines like a well-tuned engine, gliding from chord to chord something like a 3-piece version of the Buzzcocks might sound. Energetic vocals, provided by lead dude Wattage, are mixed so low you can barely make them out...which isn't that big a deal, since the band doesn't just rely on cheapshot joke lyrics anymore to make a point.

- Jim Testa

TRAINED ATTACK DOGS

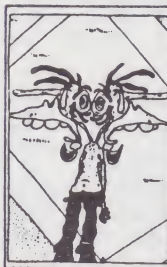
"Pizza" EP
 Rave, Box 40075, Philadelphia, PA 19106
 Four songs on a 7-inch piece of plastic introduce us to Trained Attack Dogs, a Philly combo with more balls than Rambo. Now that I'm getting sick of hardcore, these hard-rockin' outfits who've actually heard hard 'n fast stuff recorded before 1983 are one of my obsessions. Lyrics are wonderfully whacked-out, with a definite thing about psychotic violence in various guises. Double guitars roar like a mofo'. Check out "Friend Larry." Hot stuff.

- Jim T.

COMBO LIMBO EP

Drip Dry, PO Box 607, Cooper Sta., NYC 10276.
 Like way-cheap jokesville, daddi-o! Combo Limbo plunge fecklessly into the ni-tack, lo-content terrain proper to Holiday Inn cocktail lounge acts. Kitschy 50's rock and roll which seems determinedly cheeseey in a wholly Velveta kinda way. They really should have forgone the Blotto quote on their alb jacket. This record makes Joking Carrasco sound like the Swans by comparison - yipes! It's a sad comment on the current cultural climate that folks feel the need to re-examine such lame roots in a search for fresh direction, meaning, and the reckless energy of innocence. Even sadder that this is the best they could unearth. The actual evolutionary line runs from the Seeds' "No Escape" to Cabaret Voltaire's "Nag Nag Nag" to the Swans' "New Mind" and don't you ever forget it - progress must proceed from here!

- Howard

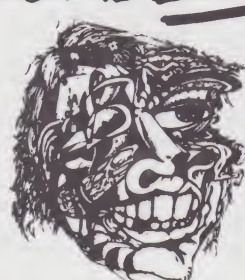


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CORONER

R.I.P., lp

Noise Records

After having Tom G. Warrior (Celtic Frost) pretty much ruin their demo by "singing" on and producing it, this time they weren't alone, and with good reason. In reality this is pretty much rehashed German deathmetal, but who could ever tire of titles like "Reborn Through Hate" or "When Angels Die?" All sarcasm aside, if you're heavily into death-metal, this may interest you...but why not just wait for the next Kreator album or something? As much as these guys hate it, here's another nugget of info I find pretty neat-o: they all used to be Frost's roadies! Overall this is minimally passable cuz it is unmistakably heavy & at times you get the feeling that your testicles are in a toaster, but not often enough.



DIAMOND

Diamond,, LP

Mijam Records

These guys apparently can't take a hint cuz they still ain't figured out that glam is dead! Just another bunch of Bon Jovi lookalikes & Motley Crue wannabes. This seriously ain't my kind of music. As if the music wasn't ballsless enough, they have the added dimension of keyboards, which just makes a bad thing worse. After one listen to the likes of "Rock The Nation" or "Fight Fire With Fire," the terms "yuk" and "blow chunks" inexplicably flash thru my head. I give this a thumb's up, right up Vince Neil's ass.

DBC

DBC, LP

Combatcore

Well I'm just happier than a feminist at a bra-burning that I got these here piece of molten vinyl. The only problem is, I don't know how many of you would be interested in this. I, in my ultimate wisdom, can see extreme Slayer tendencies riff for riff right down to their shoulder-blade length hair. But in my opinion, Slayer scrump higgeldy piggeldy over all speedmetal bands, so who better to clone? [I don't know what this means either - Ed.] The standout award on this goes to drumgod Jeff St. Louis (the guy, not the place) who has Dave Lombardo down pat. The saving grace from total ripoffdom is the lyrics, pretty mega-intricate. Mostly personal but sometimes political, but they're a lot deeper than "Be yourself" or "Reagan is the AntiChrist." Hell, I couldn't have done better myself! Another point is that Randy Burns was at the controls for this; sure he makes everything he touches sound like DeathMetal of '85, but what's wrong with that? Well, if you're too immature to wait for the next Slayer LP, then this is the one for you. I give these brain masochists a thumbs up!

BY BEN HOGG

by Tami Morgan

Voice Of Doom

Realmontes, 12/4/87

"We are the loudest band in New Jersey" proclaimed lead singer/songwriter (and one of the



band's two guitarists) John Stehl. Someone from the back of the room (no it wasn't me) let out a burst of laughter from the crowd of maybe 25-30 people. Well, I don't know about Voice Of Doom being the loudest band I've ever heard (as if that mattered) but they were a whole lot better than what the club dj forced us to listen to. Anyway, V.O.D. was actually pretty good (which surprised me, since I wasn't thrilled with their last demo tape, released before their "Faith Is Torn" EP). They're much improved since recording that last demo and even though their set was only about 35 minutes long, they put a lot of effort into it. Nobody in the crowd moshed, but they did seem appreciative. I hate bands that just stand on stage and do absolutely nothing; I'm not looking for special effects, but some movement would be nice. V.O.D. looked alive and at ease with the stage, and Stehl especially put forth a great deal of energy.

After the show, the band gave away free buttons and sold their E.P. for \$2.00. "We're not an arena band," quoth Stehl. "The buttons are free!" My only complaint with the band is that, up until now, V.O.D. has been playing weeknight gigs at impossible hours. I hope the local clubs wake up and let them play some weekend shows soon.



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URBAN WASTE
Urban Waste EP
Big City

Why re-release a 7" from 1982 on a 12" disc? Doesn't it cost more? Nothing out of the ordinary, fast rushed HC, sloppy production (sounds horrible). The usual subjects are sung about. Good to play loud when you have to clean the house and aren't concentrating on the music. I'd like to hear what they sound like NOW. Are they still around? [Editor's note - No.]

- Chris From PA.

THE ORIGINAL SINS

Big Soul, LP
Bar/None, Box 1704, Hoboken, NJ 07030

The Original Sins' debut 45 raised a lot of eyebrows but didn't hint at the depth of singer/songwriter "J.T." Terlesky's 60's fixation. The A-side of this keeper revs up a grungy whup'crazy garage-rock clamor that doesn't stop, while the B-side gives free reign to J.T.'s moodier side - some Blond On Blond-ish introspection and a few wiggy forays into psychdelia, like Lord John's spacier stuff. Great production by Glenn Morrow perfectly complements the intentions of each song, whatever they may be (rock ya, shock ya, or sing ya to sleep). I'd rank this and Electric Love Muffin as the debut LP's of 1987.

- Jim Testa

PAINTED BIRDS

Green & Peaceful World, LP
Absolute A Go Go, 88 Prospect Ave., Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07675
No major revelations here, just good, steady-handed, tuneful post-p' popper - the reliably appealing "ding" of 2 guitars being affectionately stroked and one fine ol' Jersey boy mellowly a-mewling. Everyone here writes and they all got a firm handle on solid melody lines, but handle 'em just rough 'n cavalierly eno; not to stray into wimpdom. I think it's every bit as reet as much-ballyhooed REM-spew like Absolute Grey or Miracle Legion or Hello Strangers, so if that's what gets yet earwax dripping, feel free to tune it.

- Howard Wuelfing

SPIRAL JETTY

Art's Sand Bar, LP
Incas Records (% Potkay, 48 Henry St., Jersey City, NJ 07306).
Spiral Jetty's 2nd LP is a quivering, twitching mass of ticks and neuroses, poisoned nostalgia, coffee nerves, and Monday morning hangovers. Adam Potkay's lyrics - like the films of David Lynch - posit cheery, banal suburban neighborhoods where rabid psychopaths and severed fingers wait just around the next corner. Spiral Jetty's music never erupts into the usual jangle or power-chord whump of "rock and roll;" instead, there is the incessant strumming of Potkay's nerve-jangling guitar, the fretful thumping of Andy Gesner's bass, Dave Reynold's fitful drums. These songs - some of them going back quite a bit, to my earliest memories of Spiral Jetty sets - open a Pandora's box of urban decay: lonely men aching for girls who don't know they exist ("Exactly How She Feels"), remembering how awful the good old days really were ("Where The Sun Is"), contemplating the unthinkable ("Bad Thoughts"). The three young musicians of Spiral Jetty are three of the nicest people I've met. But their 2nd lp is like mainlining a six-pack of Jolt - sweetness & bubbles that'll turn you into a screaming nervous wreck.

- Jim Testa

AGNOSTIC FRONT

Liberty & Justice For..., LP
Combat

Who sez they've gone back to their hardcore ways of "Victim In Pain"? This sounds a bit fishy to me, cuz from one Steve Martin (no relation) solo to the next and all in between, I detect severe, tired crossover (with more metal leanings). For Chrissakes, they're not even on Combatcore. Sure they're the best at what they're doing, but who cares?

- Ben Hogg

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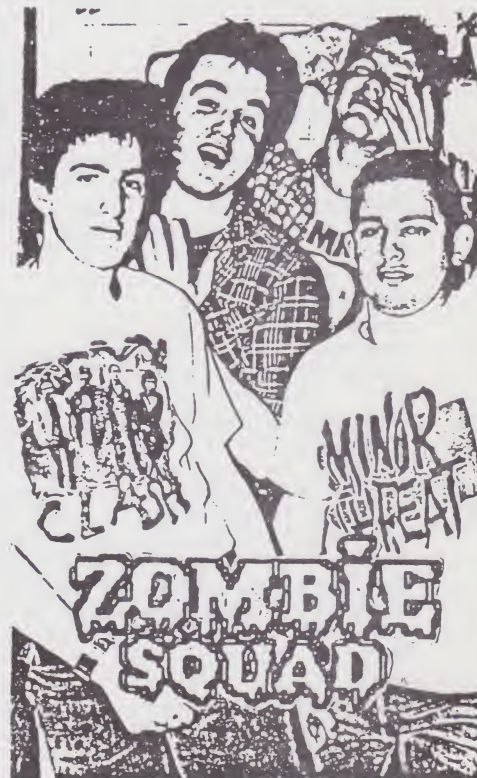
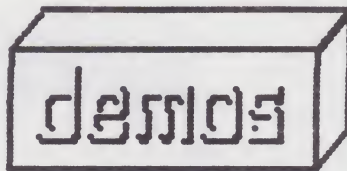
AGNOSTIC FRONT

Demo reviews are a trip on a strange bus in a city you've never visited. You can wind up in the middle of Hell or discover some unexpected nook full of wonder & surprise. But demos present their own unique problems. Typically, Band A goes into a studio, spends \$1000 on a 16-track, 6-song project, and fills it with the most unoriginal, leaden crap this side of Richard Neer. Band B, who are all 14 years old and have no hair, go into their friend's basement, record live-on-tape using somebody's boom box, and record some screechy wretched distorted mess that blows your mind with its wit, melodies, and powerful grasp of political reality. Yeah, well...it's not usually quite that clearcut, but how many points do you give for technical merit? And how do you factor in Studioitis...punk bands losing the energy they pack on stage in the face of an empty room and a sullen engineer telling them this is absolutely the last take he'll listen to... With all that in mind, here it is, again...

ZOMBIE SQUAD

% Tom Rosenthal, 85 Colonial Ave.
Larchmont, NY 10538

As the name suggests, Zombie Squad owes a debt to the Misfits (and by extension, the Ramones), with a hard, fast, melodic punk sound, guitars that expand into a hi-energy grinding roar, discernible lyrics heavy on the ghouls & gore motif. Since it's become some sort of Rite of Passage for young punk bands to be able to mosh, there's the requisite thrash thrown into the mix. Happily, at their CBGB debut gig, they did not show up in tattered black clothes, faces smeared with mascara; as it was a hc matinee, they moshed a bit more than they do on this tape, but acquitted themselves well, with a tight, powerful set. If I were these guys, I'd stay as far away from the whole hardcore/slamdance/teen matinee scene as possible and work for a rep as some sort of gothic punk band, like the Braineaters. It pays better, and you get to play for grownups.



HALF A CHICKEN



BOX 1190

PO Box 1190, New York, NY 10009
About a half hour of instrumentals, mostly slashing industrial guitar and synth, with the saving grace of real human drums (by Mark Bloch and Mike Boals). Polyrhythmic, dense, swirling, and anything but ambient...this needs total concentration to savor. Assuming you savor post-modern instrumental constructs.

HALF A CHICKEN

27 Salem La. Pt. Washington, NY 11050

5 songs, two grungy generic Gerardmetal rockers (fuzz guitar, hardcore drums, punk-inflected vocals), and 2 neo-psychedelic jams, plus a short, sweet, pretty instrumental. Nothing here to set the world on fire, and the psychedelic stuff is not nearly psycho enough; just spacey, laid-back, and too long.

THE SPORTING BACHELORS

8 Bouton Pl, Huntington, NY 11743
60's bands from Long Island are nothing new - the Mosquitos helped launch the Monkees revival, the Secret Service remain one of NYC's best unrecorded combos - and the Bachelors are in the tradition: Strong songwriting, singing, tight and savvy arrangements, and Raunchhand Mike Tchang gueststarring on sax. Plenty on this demo to suggest that their upcoming EP will be one of the stronger pop offerings of the season.

LAUGHING HYENAS
Merry Go Round, LP
Touch & Go

What other label would this be on? The Hyenas belong on Touch & Go. A cross between The Stooges and Killdozer, and that's some heavy duty cross-breeding!!! Loud noisy annoying guitars, half sung/half screamed singing, pounding drums, loud bass, I LOVE IT! A lot of times this reminds me of Gone because of the sometimes funky, jazzy bass & guitar. This could drive an old or mentally unstable person over the edge. AAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!

- Chris From PA.

THE BURNT

"Social Disease"/"Plastic Girls"
47 Myrtle Ave., Midland Pk, NJ 07432

The oldest survivors of the original Shore Core scene, the Burnt are still at it in '87 with this blazin' slice of vinyl. The Burnt were never a thrash band, but a more hard-rocking type of punk unit ala' the Stooges or Ramones. Sort of primitive, yet none the less throttling, they seem to have refined their sound somewhat and actually have a real catchy chorus in "Social Disease." Rather Clash-like, with a pounding riff and a neat trick of putting the raunchy vocals on the verses and cleaner-sounding vocals on the chorus.

When Frank Zappa coined the term "plastic" back in the mid-60's, little did anyone realize how apt the term would be 20 years later, what with the abundance of poseurs surrounding us. The contempt of the Burnt's "Plastic Girls" shows that some of us are still outraged by this sad phenomenon, with greedy and soulless yuppies at the center of the social scene. Note how each of the 3 main tempo changes enhance a different emotional response to the level of venom flowing through the lyrics. A great long scream blares out to pull us all in, as the voltage rises. A strong effort...could a 2nd lp be in store?

- Bruce Gallanter

GOD IS DOG CASSETTE

"Famous Mr. Ed" and
"Cigarettes & The Floor"
Damaged State Hospital
Productions, Box 1033, E.
Stroudsburg, PA 18301

=====

There is no easy way to describe the sometimes humorous, sometimes chilling spoken-word cassettes put out by Chris Francz. This

30-minute effort features two spoken monologs, the first by "Yuru's Paradox," the second by Chris. They both remind one of the theory that crazy people aren't really crazy...they just

see reality in different ways. Whether pondering his last cigarette or contemplating the pleasures of several horrible deaths (freezing, drowning), Francz speaks with an immediacy not usually shared by the "sane." These are not just casual ramblings but carefully constructed verbal earwigs that get inside your brain and chew their way through your mind. Not recommended for faint-hearted.

FALSE PROPHETS

IMPLOSION!, LP

Alternative Tentacles

This is the Prophets 2nd great LP for all you young punks and it is in a class by itself, with a real groovy punk tune called "Who Will Be The One." It's about trying to be yourself with great female harmony vocals. I also dig all the other Twilight Zone tunes - songs with a very suspenseful feel. The record comes with a lyric book and a very long list of thank yous. You might want to buy this just to see if YOUR name is on it.

- Capt. Fun



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PO Box 363, Whittier, CA 90608

Geez, how could you not like this LP? All your favorite bands on one album - Adolescents, MIA, 7 Seconds, Circle Jerks, SNFU, COC and tons more. The real treat is hearing Tesco Vee and White Flag do a cover of B.O.C.'s "Hot Rails To Hell." There's really no weak material here, but I guess that depends on your tastes. Can't really say anything bad about this, it's just a nice collection of catchy tunes to play when you DON'T feel like listening to a whole album by one artist. A must for those who collect albums that document the punk rock scene. P.S. This is worth buying just to hear Tesco's intro to his song, it's the funniest thing I've heard in a long time. Did'ja hear the one about...

- Chris From PA.

cassettes



ALARMING TRENDS

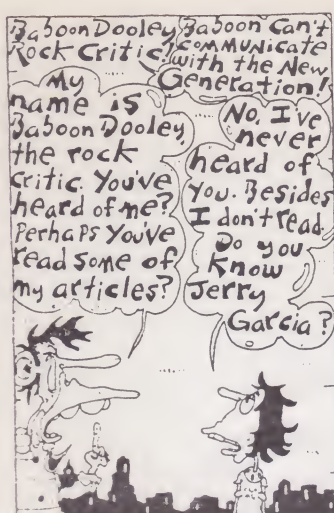
You Make Me Live In A Trailer, LP

Scorched Earth Records

Good, even great uncommercial pop, nice catchy tunes that bounce around in yer head as you're driving home from work at 1 AM. Just enough drive in the guitar too, which keeps this a few cuts above wimpier counterparts. Rebecca Watson's vocals remind me of Penelope Houston's when she hit those higher notes. The overall moodiness on these 11 songs make it the perfect LP to listen to late at night in a candlelit room when you're with your girlfriend...Anyone available?

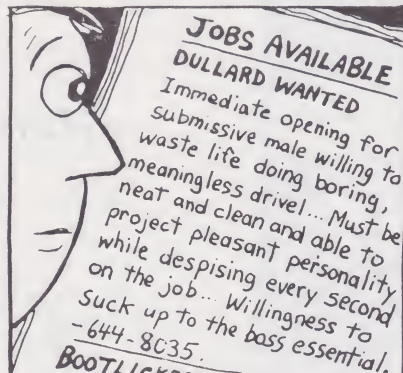
- Chris From PA.

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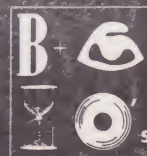
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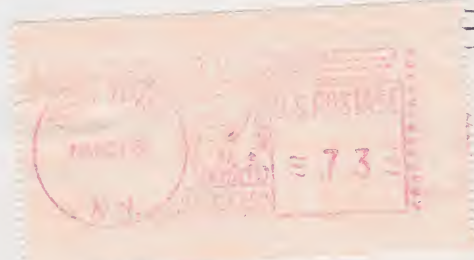
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